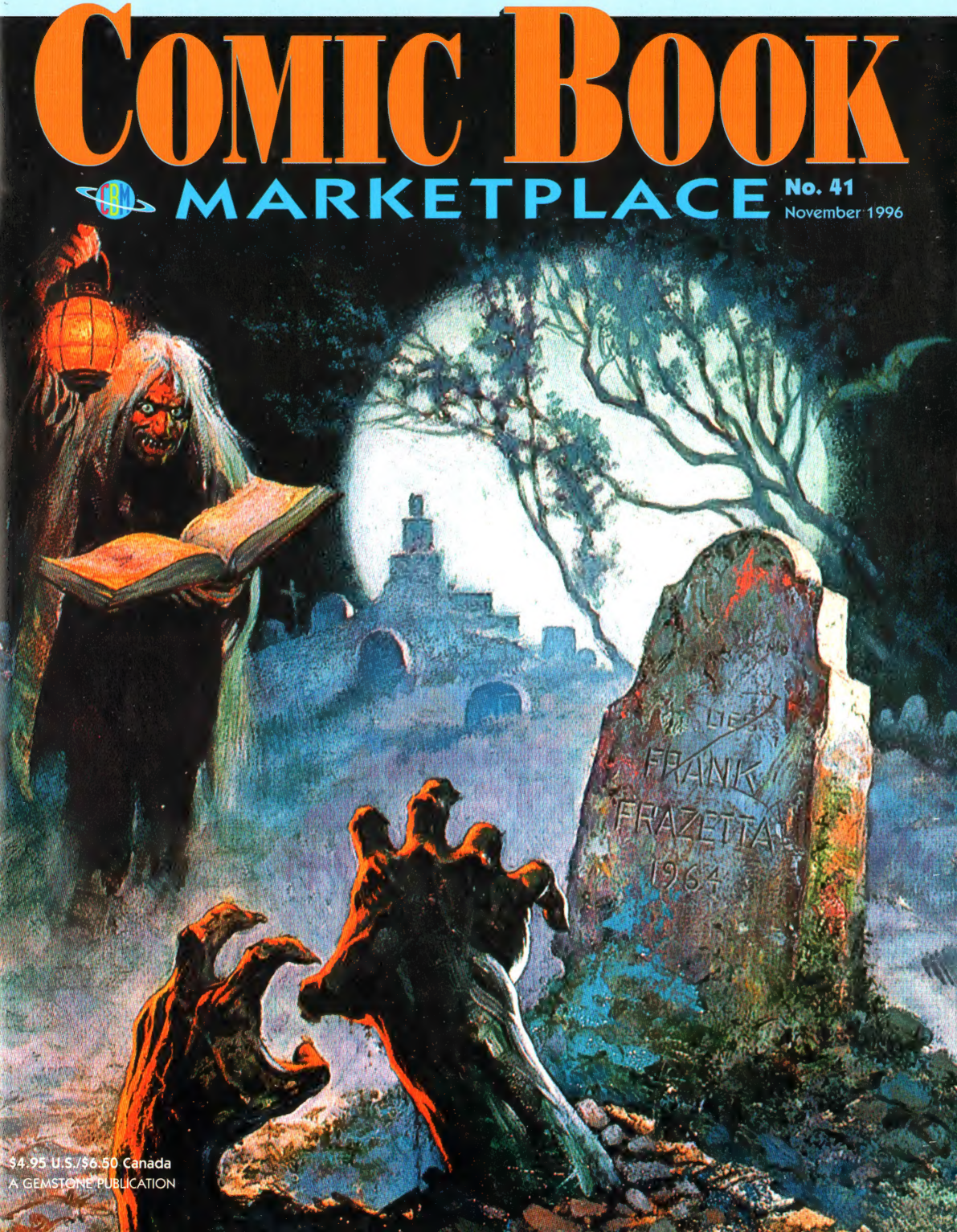
The Magazine for Golden Age & Silver Age Collectors

COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE

No. 41
November 1996



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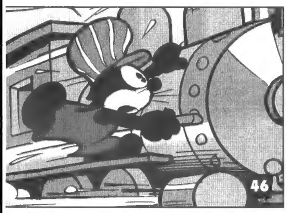

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ON THE COVER: The original Crypt-Keeper oil painting by the legendary Frank Frazetta... first published as the cover to the *Tales From The Crypt* Ballantine paperback.
Crypt Keeper © 1996 W.M. Gains; art © 1996 Frank Frazetta, used by permission.

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Issue Number #41, November 1996

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November 1996
A Gemstone Publication

Frazetta's classic rendering of the *Ghost Rider* from issue #4 (1951).

SURVEY SEZ?

An open invitation to all hobbyists… as many of you already know, *CBM* is conducting an extensive survey for our year-end issue (#42). We've already received input from a number of dealers and collectors from all across the country (and the world)… but I'd like to make our survey even more statistically significant. If your willing to risk a little time and a 32¢ stamp (Fax and Email is OK too), I'd like to know your picks for the "most collectible comics of 1996" and your predictions for "The most collectible comics of 1997" (for comics published previous to 1980). You can list up to 25 individual comics in each category, but please list them in rank order (highest ranked selection in the first position, second highest ranked selection in the second position, and so on).

Additionally (and if you have the time) I'd also love to publish some of the reasons you picked the books on your list. I think *CBM* readers would enjoy hearing the reasoning behind your final selections.

But whether you include written justification for your selection… or not… please take a moment and complete the *CBM* survey below and forward it to the address shown. Your input is essential for our report to accurately reflect the views of fandom.

Best,

Gary

Gary M. Carter, Editor

P. S. All surveys received by presstime (close of business October 25th, 1996) will be placed in a special drawing for several surprise and highly **collectible gifts**, just to say thanks!

CBM SURVEY
(For comics published previous to 1980)

A. Based on my personal criteria, I think the most collectible comics of 1996 were: (list up to 25 individual comic books in rank order.)

B. Based on my personal criteria, I predict the most collectible comics of 1997 will be: (list up to 25 individual comic books in rank order.)

Send to: CBM Survey, P.O. Box 180900, Coronado, CA 92178-0900.
Fax to: (619) 437-1993
Email to: cbmktpl@ix.netcom.com

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Shelly Moldoff Writes

Just received copy of Marketplace—featuring the artwork of Lou Fine and Will Eisner. Great issue!! I think you and Pat and the rest of the staff have finally hit the right format—that carries the spirit of the original comic book!! You are to be congratulated. Continued good luck which you all aptly deserve—for keeping the original comic book alive. P.S. Your magazine should be a must for all comic book fans. All the best,

Sheldon "Shelly" Moldoff, Florida

Writing for CBM

I've been an avid reader of Comic Book Marketplace since the beginning and I want to congratulate you for the outstanding job you do each month. It is by far the most important publication in the field. I have several ideas kicking around for articles I'd like to contribute, but I'm ignorant of process. Should articles be sent in manuscript form? on disk? What about illustrations? I don't have a scanner so how do I include copies of comics? Any help you can provide will be greatly appreciated. Keep up the great work!

Mark Upchurch, New York

The number one criteria to be a CBM author is loving comics and collecting more than life itself! Everything else is just details. Anyone who meets this criteria and would like to discuss an article idea can call the CBM editorial dept. (that's a fancy name for me) and we can talk it over. The number is (619) 437-1996.

Just one other thing for everyone who writes… please-oh-please include your telephone number with all correspondence! I can't tell you how many letters and articles we receive that are on the verge of being printed, but still need one minor detail cleared up. (This usually occurs 1-3 hours before press time!) So I desperately search the file for a phone number… and it's not there! (I've been told that the wailing and moaning from my office is truly pitiful, as I go through yet another they-didn't-include-their-phone number-again-nervous-breakdown!)

So please, if you write or send a manuscript, PLEEEEAAAASSSSEEEE include your phone number!!!!!!!! I'm begging you… my mental stability is on the line… and it's going fast!

History-Making Milestone

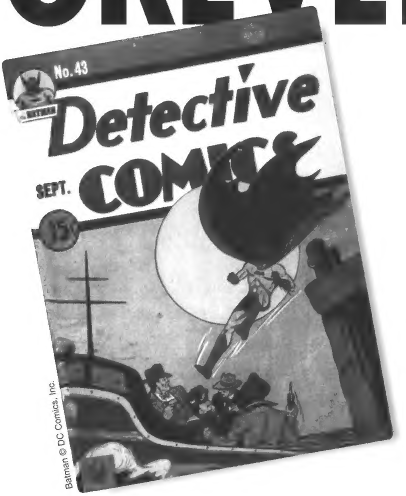
Many thanks for running my letter in CBM #36. I wanted to let you know how much I appreciated that issue. The fascinating primary sources supplied by Joel Friedman made this issue of CBM a truly history-making milestone and to my mind one of the very best you have published so far.

Perhaps the very high standard you set with #36 only added to my disappointment with #37. My main complaint is that there was simply too much advertising this issue and too little editorial, even with an extra eight pages at no extra charge. In fact after some sixty pages of editorial in #36, there were only just over forty in #37. To me, fewer pages of editorial mean fewer fun and facts and fewer reasons to purchase the magazine.

I am writing to you about this because I care very much about your splendid magazine and your efforts to cover the history of American comic books. I understand the need for advertising revenue, but urge you to maintain a better ratio between ads and editorial. I expect this may be an exceptional issue due to the Chicago and San Diego conventions, but I hope you do find a growing demand for advertising space, vital for the continuing health of the magazine. However, you might consider increasing your rates, if there is such a demand, and perhaps running fewer full-page announcement adverts.

Looking forward to future issues with more pages of articles, interviews, and information to read. Can I put another vote in for features on Steve Ditko (could you reprint his rare Sixties fanzine inter- (Continued on page 70)

BATMAN. FOREVER.



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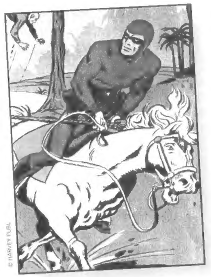
THE GHOST WHO WALKS...

By Pat S. Calhoun

Over an eleven-year period, from 1951-1961, Harvey published ten issues featuring the Phantom, reprinting the newspaper strip of this singularly important costumed hero. First appearing in 1936, the Phantom did a lot to develop traditions that would become staple elements of the comic book heroes that followed. The look of a form-fitting costume, hood, and mask defined what the well-dressed hero would wear. And the masked look fostered an aloof attitude, impersonal and imperious. The Phantom made the native tribes of his jungle home believe he was supernatural by training a son each generation to take his place- seeming to be hundreds of years old- the natives called him "the Ghost who Walks". And his skull ring left many a terrible tattoo on various crooks' chins and jaws. The Phantom was created by Lee Falk and written and drawn for many years by the team of Lee Falk and Ray Moore.

All through the 1940s Phantom reprints had been published by David McKay, and Harvey picked up the license after McKay quit the comic business. The first Harvey Phantom issue was *Harvey Comics Hits* #51 (October 1951), which was actually the first issue of this short-lived "umbrella" title. Harvey reprinted the strips smaller than David McKay, but the art was clean and simple enough to hold up, and the end result was more story per page. Most of the art in these issues is by Wilson McCoy, who took over after Ray Moore.


© HARVEY PUBL.

This exemplary issue contains two thrilling Phantom tales, with the first one, "Curse of the Phantom's Treasure", being a 16-page masterpiece. Many of the best Phantom stories are constructed with a gang of criminals who end up doublecrossing each other--so that by the time the Phantom catches up with them it's an easy mop-up. In this perfect example, four white crooks make the mistake of stealing the Phantom's treasure trophy for the "Jungle Olympics", a gold vase full of jewels. The trophy is left unguarded because there is a curse on the treasure- that any who steal it shall die. Then the scene switches to the Olympics, where the team that has just won the games--upon realizing that the trophy is missing- accuses last year's winners of having stolen the trophy. The two tribes gear up for battle, giving the Phantom only a 24-hour truce to find the real culprits...

The other yarn, "Terror of the Tiny People", is pretty good as well. It's a smoothly executed 15-pager of the "con man out to set up a kingdom by scaring native tribes with phony magic" jungle plot. Throw in a one-page origin on the inside front cover, a text spiel on the strip's appeal on the inside back cover, and a Harvey Hits Phantom pin-up on the back cover--and you end up with 35 pages of the Ghost who Walks.

Harvey Comics Hits #56 (April 1952--the interim issues having dealt with other characters, hence the "umbrella" tag) featured two more Phantom tales, with the same inside front cover origin and back cover pin-up. "Dragon God of Death" was also published in *Ace Comics* #150 and #151 (the last two issues) by David McKay in 1949. It's another solid "scare the natives into submission" story; one in which Devil, the Phantom's trained wolf, gets to save the day. This time both Phantom stories run 16 pages each. "Curse of the Killer Beasts" is actually a fairly tame entry, a little light in the drama department, but carried off by nicely detailed characters. In this issue the inside back cover article has been dropped to make way for a full-page house ad for "Teen-Age Dope Slaves".

After these two issues Harvey took a five-year break from the Phantom, but they came back in 1957, at the very dawn of the Silver Age, with the Ghost who Walks as the debut character for their new umbrella title, *Harvey Hits*. *Harvey Hits* #1 (September 1957) has an enjoyable 18-page Phantom short novel, highlighted by a full-page-splash "intro" by Jack Kirby. This issue's back-up feature is a five-page EC-style parody- Shirl, the Jungle Girl. After the Comics Code was adopted in late-1954, the industry began targeting a younger audience, and that made the Harvey Phantom newspaper-strip reprints one of the more sophisticated titles on the stands.

Harvey Hits #6 (February 1958) contains another Phantom classic, a 19-pager about an old man who gets out of a North African prison after a 40-year stretch. When he shaves off his long beard, the mark of the Phantom is revealed on his cheek. He goes to the USA to find his son, whose help he enlists in recovering a hoard of loot stashed decades ago. But a friend of the Phantom's sees the old man with the skull mark on his cheek and contacts the Phantom.

Harvey Hits #48 (Sep 1961) This last Phantom issue was also the last newspaper strip reprint comic of the Silver Age, and even in the papers adventure strips were phasing out.

Harvey Hits #1 (Sep 1957) A quiet but rewarding chapter of Silver Age "revivalism" began with this issue, the first of eight to reprint the great Phantom newspaper novels.

Soon the Phantom is pursuing the man his father once contended with. It's always a treat when the multi-generational Phantom legacy is part of the story, and this novel enthralls from start to finish. It's credited on the "origin" splash page as by Lee Falk and Wilson McCoy. There are some real oddball fillers in the back of this book; the kind of pseudo-fact pages that were regular features in Golden Age and early Silver Age comics.

The Phantom novel in *Harvey Hits* #12 (August 1958) is a sequel to the story in *HH* #1. Characters from the earlier tale meet up with the Ghost who Walks for another adventure, this time with the Scarlet Sorceress. The strip seemed to alternate between hard-core crime yarns and milder human-interest stories. And while the latter lacked the intensity of the former, character development and charmingly detailed settings provided plenty of entertainment.

There is a 22-page Phantom novel, "Vengeance of the Lake God", inside *Harvey Hits* #15 (December 1958). It's yet another "great white hoaxer wowing natives with trickery" thing, worthwhile reading, but not a high point of the series.

"The Adventure of the Wild Girl" appeared in *Harvey Hits* #26 (November 1959). This romantic 23-pager fits into the "human interest" category; the distinguishing factor is the absence of an out-and-out villain in the story.

Harvey Hits #36 (September 1960) tells a tale that links back 400 years to the first Phantom and a pirate stronghold that he destroyed singlehandedly. The present Phantom ends up as bodyguard to an archeological expedition to find the ruined fortress. It's an engaging 20-pager.

The penultimate Harvey Phantom issue, *Harvey Hits* #44 (May 1961), presents the excellent "Hoodoo of the Pirate Ship". After criminals hijack a luxury cruise liner, the armed forces cannot take them over by force as they have 150 women hostages on board. Among them are the Phantom's fiancee and her mother. So the Ghost who Walks sneaks onto the ship and begins a reign of terror to convince the hijackers that there is a supernatural force out to get them. This one is action-packed.

Harvey quit publishing Joe Palooka with the March issue and Dick Tracy with the April issue. Newspaper adventure strips were falling out of style, and the comic books based on the strip characters closed up shop as well.

The series ended on a strong note with *Harvey Hits* #48 (September 1961). "The Ghost Who Walks in Uranium Valley" starts with crooks moving in on a lawless locale where uranium has been discovered. The thieves take over the Assay Office, and then when a good claim comes in they immediately go out and jump it. This seems like a good scheme until the Phantom gets wind of it. This is that classic "one man against a mob" Phantom situation. Devil helps out, the Phantom's "supernatural" scare tactics demoralize the mob, and the story unfolds with perfect pacing, touches of humor, and clean characterizations in a fine performance by Falk and McCoy.

Thus one of the best Silver Age hero series ended two months before *Fantastic Four* #1 came out. The *Harvey Hits* Phantom reprints showcased the greatest costumed hero from the era when daily doses of adventure made the newspapers sizzle. And the comic books that colored and collated this material into self-contained novels, enhanced the strips with perfect packaging. As these Phantom issues prove, the successful results of such efforts rank among the best comic books ever published. ■

FACING PAGE: *Harvey Comics Hits* #56 (Apr 1952) Harvey packaged many of the *Comics Hits* Phantom issues to appeal to fans of both the horror genre and the jungle genre.

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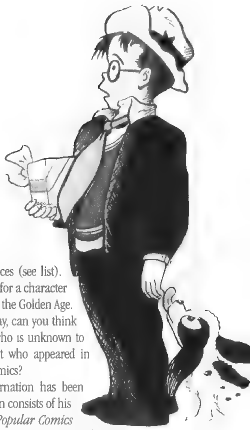


BY MICHELLE NOLAN

FEW EARLY COMIC BOOK ARTISTS HAD A STYLE AS INTENSELY personal as Sheldon Mayer. And few artists ever had a Golden Age character they could truly call their own. For Mayer, however, Scribbly represented a biographical daydream of sorts.

Scribbly was Mayer and Mayer was Scribbly, more or less. Some say a lot more than less.

Scribbly Jibbet is one of those cult characters that exist on the fringes of comic book fandom. Scribbly fans–and there are more than you might think–love the little guy and his manic adventures. Speaking as a collector of the Golden Age adventures of the greatest character of them all in my book–Green Lantern–one of the benefits of collecting *All-American Comics* is also acquiring early adventures of Mayer's teen cartoonist.

Most comic book fans, even those quite knowledgeable about the Golden Age, have only a passing interest in Scribbly. But I received so much favorable feedback regarding my article about Mayer's later and much better known creation Sugar & Spike (*CBM* #38), that I thought I could interest you in the article I promised about Scribbly. If you like offbeat humor laced with a gentle touch of satire, Scribbly will hook you, the same way he hooked me when I first stumbled onto a tattered copy of *Scribbly* #1 (August/September 1948) in a second-hand bookstore in 1958 at the age of about ten.

Scribbly actually had four incarnations over a 14-year period, for reasons that I've never been able to uncover. Mayer is gone now, having passed away in 1991 at the age of 74, and I've never seen much research done on his huge body of work beyond the biographical entries in Ron Goulart's books and Lanny Mayer's insightful article "The Secret Life Of Sugar & Spike" published in *Overstreet's Comic Book Quarterly* #3. (Perhaps other fans or historians can add to this article–please send your letters to *CBM*!)

Fans might be surprised to learn that Scribbly appeared in no fewer than nine different comics! I believe I have tracked down all his appearances (see list). This might be a record for a character who was not an icon of the Golden Age. Or, to put it another way, can you think of another character who is unknown to most modern fans, yet who appeared in that many different comics?

Scribbly's first incarnation has been largely lost. This version consists of his appearances in Dell's *Popular Comics* #8 and 9 (September and October 1936), Dell's *The Funnies* from #2 (November 1936) through at least #26 (November 1938) and possibly as late as #29 (February 1939), and his first 19 appearances in Max Gaines' *All-American Comics*, from #1 (April 1939) through #19 (October 1940), after Mayer moved over from Dell to *All-American Comics* to work under Gaines as a 21-year-old boy wonder editor. Mayer may have had a few early joke strips published–I can't be sure–but I do know that Scribbly was the only continuing character he drew in the first few years of his career, because he functioned primarily as an editor until he was in his early 30s

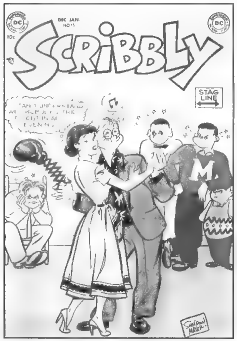
Mayer's earliest version of Scribbly is that of an endearing teen cartoonist. Most reference sources, including the *Overstreet Price Guide*, list Scribbly's debut as occurring in *The Funnies* #2 (November 1936), but I discovered that his appearances in *Popular* #8 and 9 predate *The Funnies* #2. For whatever reason, Mayer simply shifted the titles the little guy appeared in, all the while trying to disguise the fact that he was sneaking an original comic strip into comic books consisting of virtually nothing else except newspaper reprints! This was a feat worthy of Scribbly himself! I don't have any of the early Dell issues for reference, and I don't know any Northern California collectors who have them so I wasn't able to check those out for this article.

I do, however, have the issues in which Scribbly ends his first incarnation and begins his second. In *All-American* #17 (August 1940, in which Green Lantern appears in his first full story after a brief appearance at the end of his origin tale in the previous issue), Scribbly finds himself in possession of a horse in a typically amusing 4-page tale. The horse kicks a pesky salesman and gets the boy cartoonist in good with his editor. In *All-American* #18, however, Scribbly makes only a cameo appearance as thugs turn up to harass his neighbor Ma Hunkel. Her daughter Sisty and Scribbly's brother, Dinky (later Snoony) foil the crooks in truly comical fashion, but this tale sets the stage for Ma Hunkel's conversation to Mayer's satire on super heroes, the character of the original Red Tornado. Her first five adventures (*All American* #20-24) are reprinted in "The Smithsonian Book of Comic Book Comics", showing the transition of the strip to the title "Scribbly and The Red Tornado", so you can easily check these out for yourself at your local library.

Scribbly #2 (Oct/Nov 1948) An idea Mayer used for the last panel of the Scribbly story in All-American #17 eight years earlier formed the basis for this Scribbly cover.

Scribbly #15 (Dec 1951/Jan 1952) Similar to the cover of #1, the last issue again displays Mayer's talent for offbeat humor.

Mayer's Ma Hunkel, complete with ludicrous pajamas and an inverted stewpot with holes for eyes, is fondly remembered by a few fans as the first satire on super heroes, appearing as she did only a couple of years after the debut of Superman. (Mayer played an editorial role with the son of Krypton as well!) The Red Tornado was literally a "long underwear" character!



During this period of the "kid's" cartoon life, which ended simultaneously with *All-American* #59 (July 1944) and *Comic Cavalcade* #7 (Summer 1944), Scribbly usually played a secondary role to Ma Hunkel and the Cyclone Twins, the identity the two children assumed in *All-American* #24. The strip is a dead-on satire, which makes it fun. But to me, the real Scribbly didn't appear for four more years.

But before we leap across time, here's another "first" of which you may not be aware. DC's first "super pet" sidekick was not Green Lantern's dog Streak (who debuted in *Green Lantern* #30, March 1948). No, the first "super pet" was Runt the Mystery Dog, who made his first appearance in an absolutely hysterical Scribbly and The Red Tornado strip in *All-American* #42 (September 1942). Even those of you who cringe at Krypto and shrug at Streaky would find this funny (because, after all, that's what Mayer intended!)

Mayer, who turned 27 in 1944, temporarily abandoned Scribbly in the summer of that year. Why, I have no idea, unless it was to pursue his duties as an editor or to work on creating other characters. Perhaps it was partly a function of growing up. Without warning in the summer of 1948, however, Scribbly reappeared in his own title (#1, August/September 1948). This was the beginning of his third incarnation, which lasted for the first ten issues in truly magical stories dealing with the daydreams doldrums and delights of a kid cartoonist's life. Some may think Mayer did his best work in the *All American* series, but not I.

On the contrary, I believe *Scribbly* #1-10 represent the peak of Mayer's powers as a cartoonist, or at least until he did some absolutely brilliant work in the first half of the *Sugar & Spike* series. Chances are, however, that the reappearance of Scribbly in 1948 had more to do with the new vogue in teen humor comics than anything else. Perhaps Mayer saw it as an opportunity to update his wonderful character as a companion title to *A Date With Judy*, *Leave It To Binky*, and *Buzzy*. That's how Scribbly was advertised–as another teen humor title. At any rate, Mayer was in the saddle again, certainly in Scribbly's daydreams when the kid drew himself as the western hero "The Lightfoot Kid" that's part of the genius of the first ten issues of *Scribbly*, in which a cartoonist often drew himself as a cartoonist who often drew himself.

Like all great humor strips, Scribbly can be read on different levels… by children and adults. This is what accounts for his cult popularity among today's collectors. (Speaking of collectors, I recently completed my 15-issue Scribbly collection with the acquisition of #6. I know ye editor and a few others have the full set of *Scribbly*. But I wonder how many other full sets are out there? Please write so we can nail down the relative rarity of the various issues!)

In the first few issues of *Scribbly*, the boy cartoonist is no older than 16 but has a crush on Red Rigley, a kind, gorgeous redhead who is about three years older and is the creator of the comic strip "Terrificman." What's interesting is how Scribbly's passion for Red eventually fades as he discovers Clover Cooley, who makes her debut in *Scribbly* #3. Clover starts out as about an eighth-grader in 1949 but soon blossoms into a beautiful brunette of 16 or 17. Clover's first

cover appearance is on #6, the same issue in which the Jibbet family dog is revealed to be named Dizzy (that's right, the same Dizzy Dog who appeared in Mayer's funny animal comics!) Also in #6, Scribbly's rival for Clover's affections, Bentley Bilgewater, is introduced.

The first issue of *Scribbly* opens with a daydream in which the kid is sitting on a throne at a drawing board, with his kid brother Snoony and dog Dizzy holding the art supplies. Above the drawing board, on which Scribbly is working on "Speedy-Man," is a sign reading "Scribbly, King of All Cartoonists!" Scribbly's secretary holds the phone toward him, saying "Your Majesty, Red Rigley the cartoonist is on the wire! She's stuck! She's got Terrificman trapped in a burning telephone booth and doesn't know how to get him out! To which Scribbly replies, "Burning telephone booth? Simple! He spends a nickel and calls the fire department!" And so begins the second life of Scribbly and his third incarnation.

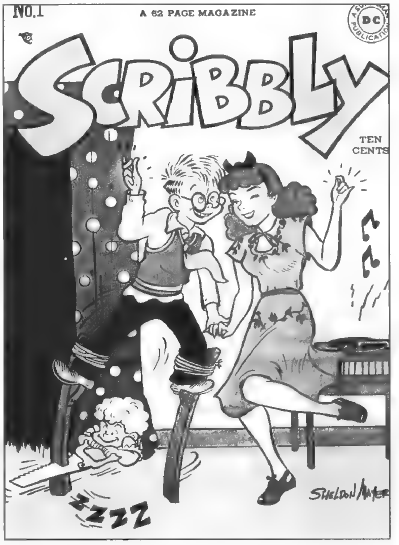
In the second story of the first issue, Scribbly, having been rejected as a cartoonist because he's too young, finds a job with Editor O'Hara as his copy boy on the Morning Bugle. In the second issue, he accidentally finds his comic strip, The Lightfoot Kid, in print in the Bugle. Complications ensue and Scribbly finds himself with a job drawing the Lightfoot Kid. I can't begin to express the extent of Mayer's genius in one column, but see for yourself. These first ten issues are bursting with brilliant examples of gentle humor and marvelous but never cruel satire.

Incidentally, the cover of *Scribbly* #2–in which he manages to get Red Rigley to cling to him in the water because Snoony is holding up a fake shark's fin–is taken directly from the final panel gag in *All-American* #18. (In that series, Mayer encouraged fans to send in gags for his last panel in every issue.) It's a nice example of how a cartoonist never throws out a good idea.

In issue #6, Scribbly finally realizes that Clover, not Red, should be the object of his affections. There's a hilarious scene, shortly after Clover says she wants to interview "a real newspaper man" for her school paper, in which she reminds Scribbly about how the heroine landed the editor's affections in the film "Love Goes to Press." (Talk about madcap metaphors!) *Scribbly* #6 is a sheer delight, filled as it is with commentaries on life, love and newspapering. If you get only one issue of Scribbly, this is the one to get! Unfortunately, it's also turning out to be one of the scarcest issues of a generally scarce run. I searched for more than a dozen years to find the sixth issue! Ironically, however, I later spotted one at this summer's San Diego Convention and was able to tip off another happy Scribbly collector about it! That's one of the greatest joys in collecting comics–leading other collectors to gems they have sought for a long time!

Scribbly #8, 9 and 10 all have four-part stories. Mayer's amusing sense of humor is reflected in one of the panels in #8, in which Scribbly's picture at Clover's house has his trademark tie hanging out of the frame! There's no doubt that Carl Barks was the king of panels crammed with jokes, but that was also one of Mayer's fortes. You can't read Scribbly without laughing at all the funny details Mayer used.

After *Scribbly* #10, however, Mayer began Scribbly's fourth incarnation. He completely dropped Red Rigley, Editor O'Hara and Scribbly's cartoonist presence at the Morning Bugle from the continuity. Issue #11 carries the story title "Scribbly Turns to Romance," and even though it's indicated to be a four-part story, all four stories are typical teen humor tales that stand alone, as do all the stories in #12-15. Although the last five issues are well done as teen humor goes, they're missing many of the satiric elements that gave the strip so much of its charm. I wonder whether Mayer was instructed to change the strip, or whether he just tired of the teen cartoonist angle and decid-



Scribbly #1 (Aug/Sep 1948) Much of Sheldon Mayer's humor involved sight gags, possible and otherwise, such as this bizarre sequence.

CBM CHECKLIST

Sheldon Mayer's Scribbly

Scribbly #1
(Aug/Sep 1948)
Scribbly (untitled) 12 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 8 pgs;
Littul Snoony (untitled) 4 pgs;
Scribbly (untitled 5 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 5 pgs

Scribbly #2
(Oct-Nov 1948)
Scribbly (untitled) 8 pgs,
Littu Snoony (untitled 6 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 10 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 8 pgs

Scribbly #3
(Dec 1948-Jan 1949)
Scribbly (untitled) 13 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 6 pgs,
Littul Snoony (untitled)
3 pgs, Scribbly (untitled)
8 pgs, Scribbly (untitled)
5 pgs

Scribbly #4
(Feb-Mar 1949)
Scribbly (untitled) 7 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 7 pgs,
Littul Snoony (untitled)
3 pgs, Scribbly (untitled)
6 pgs; Scribbly (untitled)
12 pgs

Scribbly #5
(Apr-May 1949)
Scribbly (untitled) 11 pgs;
Littul Snoony (untitled)
2 pgs,
Scribbly in "Big Doings"
Part I 12 pgs,
Scribbly in "Big Doings"
Part II 5 pgs,
Scribbly in "Big Doings"
Part III 5 pgs

Scribbly #6
(Jun-Jul 1949)
Scribbly in "Navy Blues"
Part I 6 pgs,
Scribbly in "Navy Blues"
Part II 10 pgs;
Scribbly in "Navy Blues"
Part III 6 pgs, Littul Snoony
(untitled) 2 pgs; Scribbly
(untitled) 6 pgs; Scribbly
(untitled) 5 pgs

Scribbly #7
(Aug-Sep 1949)
Scribbly (untitled 9 pgs, Littul
Snoony (untitled)
3 pgs; Scribbly (untitled)
6 pgs; Scribbly (untitled)
5 pgs; Scribbly (untitled)
12 pgs

Scribbly #8
(Nov-Dec 1949)
Scribbly in "Hollywood Calls"
Part I 12 pgs,
Scribbly in "Hollywood Calls"
Part II 7 pgs;
Scribbly's Cartoon Page
1 pg; Scribbly in "Hollywood
Calls" Part III 6 pgs, Littul
Snoony (untitled)
3 pgs, Scribbly in
"Hollywood Calls" Part IV
6 pgs.

Scribbly #9
(Jan-Feb 1950)
Scribbly in "Frontier Daze"
Prologue 6 pgs,
Scribbly in "Frontier Daze"
Chapter 1 6 pgs,
Scribbly in "Frontier Daze"
Chapter 2 12 pgs,
Scribbly in "Frontier Daze"
Chapter 3 9 pgs,
Scribbly's Cartoon Page
1 pg,
Littu Snoony (untitled)
2 pgs

Scribbly #10
(Mar-Apr 1949)
Scribbly in "The Glamorous
Saga of Gorgeous Gertie"
11 pgs,
Scribbly in "Gorgeous Gertie"
Part II 6 pgs,
Scribbly in "Gorgeous Gertie"
Part III 7 pgs,
Scribbly in "Gorgeous Gert e"
Part IV 8 pgs,
Littul Snoony (untitled)
3 pgs

Scribbly #11 (May-Jun 1950)
Scribbly in "Scribbly Turns to
Romance" Part I 4 pgs;
Scribbly in "Scribbly Turns to
Romance" Part II 12 pgs,
Scribbly in "Scribbly Turns to
Romance" Part III 7 pgs;
Scribbly in "Scribbly Turns to
Romance" Part IV 9 pgs;
Littul Snoony (untitled)
3 pgs.

Scribbly #12
(Jul-Aug 1950)
Scribbly (untitled) 12 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 11 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 12 pgs

Scribbly #13
(Sep-Oct 1950)
Scribbly (untitled) 12 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled) 12 pgs;
Littul Snoony (untitled) 3 pgs;
Scribbly in "Homogenized
Moonlight" Part I 7 pgs,
Scribbly in "Homogenized
Moonlight" Part II 5 pgs,

Scribbly #14
(Oct-Nov 1951, 36 pgs;
Scribbly (untitled) 6 pgs;
Scribbly (untitled) 5 pgs;
Scribbly's Cartoon Page 1 pg,
Scribbly (untitled) 9 pgs.

Scribbly # 15
(Dec 1951-Jan 1952,
36 pgs)
Scribbly in "Clover's Debut"
Part I 6 pgs,
Scribbly in "Clover's Debut"
Part II 5 pgs;
Scribbly "At Home" 3 pgs;
Littul Snoony (untitled) 3 pgs,
Scribbly (untitled)

Leave It To Binky #15
(Jul-Aug 1950)
Scribbly (untitled) 8 pgs;

Buzzy #32 (Jul/Aug 1950)
Scribbly (untitled) 6 pgs,

Buzzy #33 (Sep/Oct 1950)
Scribbly (untitled) 8 pgs;
Cover reads "Secret Hearts
Comics" but, ironically, the
real DC Secret Hearts title
already had been put on a 1
1/2 year hiatus during the
romance glut

Buzzy #34 (Nov/Dec 1950)
Scribbly (untitled) 6 pgs

Buzzy #39 (Sep/Oct 1951)
Scribbly (untitled) 5 pgs

Sugar and Spike #30
(Aug/Sep 1960)
Scribbly (in a cameo) and
Scribbly Junior appear with
Sugar and Spike in "The
Mystery of the Funny Faces
Inna Sand" 6 pgs.

EARLY SCRIBBLY APPEARANCES:

Popular Comics #8
(Sep 1936), #9 (Oct 1936)

The Funnies #2 (Nov 1936)
through at least #26
(Nov 1938). Scribbly may
have appeared through #29
(Feb 1939). He was cover
featured on #21 and 26
He may not have appeared
in every issue

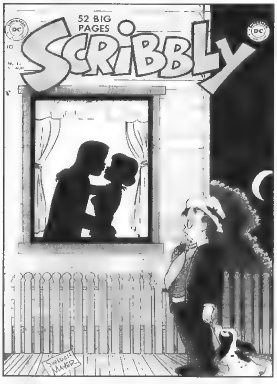
All-American Comics #1
(Apr 1939) through #59
(Jul 1944).

Big All-American Comics
(1944 one-shot).

Comic Cavalcade #1
(Win 1942-43, reprint); #4
(Fall 1943); #7 (Sum 1944)

ed to try straight teen humor with slightly older versions of Scribbly and Clover.

Scribbly #13 is dated September/October 1950 and is the last 52-page issue. However, the kid came back for two more issues a year later--#14 is October/November 1951 and #15 is December 1951/January 1952. That was a highly unusual move for DC, which was the most stable of Golden Age companies. In fact, in the entire history of the company, Scribbly became the first character to be discontinued and then brought back like that, although it occurred several times in the late 1950's with other humor titles.



Scribbly #12 (Jul/Aug 1948) – Mayer's versatility is demonstrated by this wistful cover of a boy, his girl and his dog. The girl may be fickle, but never Dizzy Dog!

Scribbly also appeared in single stories in *Leave It To Binky* #15 and *Buzzy* #32, 33, 34 and 39. Apparently, these were stories originally intended for *Scribbly* #14. There's also an interesting irony in the Scribbly story in *Buzzy* #33 (September/October 1950), in which Clover is shown reading "Secret Hearts Comics." The real *Secret Hearts* was put on hiatus with #6 (July/August 1950) before resuming a year and a half later!

Alas, except for a surprising cameo in a 1960 issue of *Sugar & Spike* (#30), Scribbly was gone forever with #15. But he'll never be forgotten by fans who love to laugh along with "The King of All Cartoonists!"--Scribbly in the comics and Mayer in real life. ■

Michelle Nolan is a nationally recognized collector and researcher of comic books from the '40s through the '60s. In real life Michelle works as a freelance journalist.

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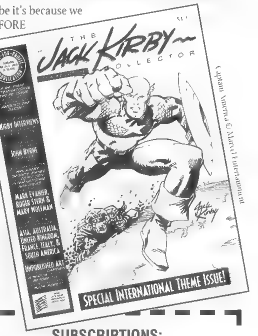

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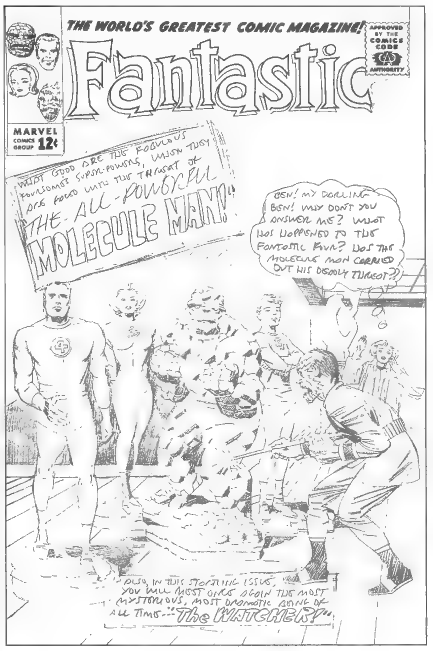
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CLUTCHING HER THROAT, SHE SCREAMED...

Wherever you go in our culture, one trait is common to all who are fans of popular literature... they love to be scared! Ever since humankind invented language. It's easy to imagine a group of cavemen sitting in a cave illuminated by fitfully flickering firelight. The warriors, each in their turn, tell of the real-life horrors and monsters they encountered during the day's adventures. Horror stories have enjoyed continuous popularity with the masses throughout history, despite the disapproval of church, the upper class, and the educational establishment.

Oh... the HORROR!

A capsule history of American horror comics.

By S. C. Ringgenberg

A cover closeup from Adventures Into The Unknown! #22 (Aug 1951).

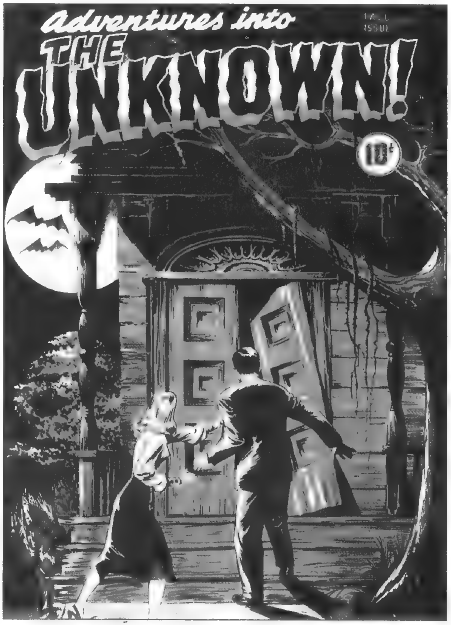
Horror comics are currently enjoying a mini-boom because of the popularity of characters like Vampirella, Lady Death, Evil Ernie, DC's Vertigo line, and of course the Tales From The Crypt series on TV. So the editor thought *CBM* readers might enjoy a quick overview of horror comics from the very earliest titles of the '40's up to the end of the '70's horror boom.

As literacy became more prevalent in the nineteenth century, inexpensive reading matter became more and more popular, including horror stories in the forms of broadsheets and "penny dreadfuls". An interesting precursor to modern horror comics (and one that's seldom noted) is Japanese prints illustrating the ghost stories which are a long-standing tradition in Japanese culture. Many of these stories and the prints illustrating them are quite grisly, and genuinely hair-raising.

Horror continued to enjoy mass popularity into the 20th century. Indeed, as early as 1905, the Edison Company released a film version of Frankenstein. In the '30's, people could enjoy a variety of horror pulps including the sexually titillating line of "Spicy" titles and others like *Weird Tales*, *Horror Stories*, and *Terror Tales*, that relied heavily on bondage, torture, and murder. Besides the pulps, there were horror films and radio shows, too. All three forms of media would have a profound effect on the shape of horror comics, especially films, which in some cases directly provided the source material for comic book adaptations of Frankenstein, The Creature From the Black Lagoon, King Kong, and others. William Gaines and Al Feldstein, the men behind EC Comics' line of horror titles, have said that radio shows such as "Inner Sanctum", "Lights Out" and "The Witch's Tale" were direct influences on EC's trio of horror titles, with their snap endings and triumvirate of grimly humorous hosts.

The horror and science fiction pulps clearly had their impact on horror comics, and horror writers like Robert Howard and H. P. Lovecraft, have had their work adapted to comics fairly frequently.

Some crime newspaper strips, like Dick Tracy dealt in stomach-churning villains and sadistic violence long before the horror comic book, per se, existed. They in turn spawned the brutal crime comics of the '40's epitomized by *Crime Does Not Pay*. With their vicious protagonists and unflinching depictions of violence, crime comics broke ground for the horror craze of the early '50's. The earliest true horror comics were the *Classic Comics* adaptations of novels like Frankenstein, Dracula, Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde and the short stories by Edgar Allen Poe in the early '40's. Though restrained, they at least gave kids a taste of classic horror.



***Adventures Into The Unknown* #1 (American Comics Group, Fall 1948) The 1st continuing horror title.**

Dick Briefer's "New Adventures of Frankenstein" strip, which debuted in *Prize Comics* #7 (1940) was the earliest *continuing* horror series Writer/artist Briefer seemed as inspired by Mary Shelley's original novel as by the Universal Frankenstein films. Briefer's monster was originally a hideous 15-foot tall child-murdering monster, but by the middle of World War II, Briefer had tamed him and turned his strip into a monster comedy, two decades before "The Munsters" hit the tube. Briefer's lovable Frankenstein got his own title in 1945, and though it was suspended in 1948, it re-emerged during the '50's horror boom, and the tone remained grim until its demise in 1954. To his credit, the versatile Briefer handled the horror and the humor with equal facility.

Even a superhero icon like Batman battled vampires in one of his earliest outings. It's worth noting that the two-part vampire tale in *Detective Comics* #31 and 32 was penned by pulp and comics writer Gardner Fox, who made significant contributions to the mythology of many famous comics characters and even wrote a handful of pre-trend EC horror stories.

Many superhero comics of the '30's and '40's had horror elements in the stories, including monstrous villains and scenes of sadism and torture on the covers. The Timely (Marvel) and Fox Comics lines had particularly fiendish cover scenes. It seemed as though the "cheaper" the company, the more they traded in monsters and torture. A sampling of story titles from *Captain America* should give an idea of the horror elements they featured: "The Ageless Oriental Who Wouldn't Die", "The Hunchback of Hollywood and the Movie Murders", "The Gruesome Secret of the Dragon of Death", and "The Queer Case of the Murdering Butterfly and the Ancient Mummies" to name but a few.

Also important is The Heap (1942), an early horror-oriented character who, oddly enough, shambled from the pages of Hillman Periodicals' *Air Fighters*. The monstrous Heap was the sad result of a wartime plane crash in a swamp and was a genuinely original monster in his day, though he is probably most important as the obvious progenitor to an entire sub-genre of muck monsters that emerged during the horror boom of the early '70's. It's rarely remarked upon, but the Heap (as well as "Outer Sanctum", Kurtzman and Elder's brilliant parody of the character in *Mad* #5) also inspired at least one humorous underground comics character from the early '70's. Scott Shaw's parodistic monster, The Turd, who appeared in *All Crap Comics*, was–you guessed it–an ambulatory pile of... well... fecal matter... as well as radioactive isotopes and other less savory substances. The Turd was a delightfully light-hearted parody of the muck monster genre which tended to be deadly serious (or in the case of Marvel's *Man-Thing*, deadly dull)

1947 saw the publication of Avon Comics' *Eerie*, one of the earliest horror comics. Although it died with the first issue, it was to rise from the grave four years later when the EC-inspired horror boom was in full swing. The next horror comic came in the form of ACG's *Adventures Into The Unknown* (Fall, 1948), cited by historians as the first regularly published horror title *AITU* featured ghosts and werewolves along with the occasional adaptation like, "The Spirit of Frankenstein" stories. Marvel, whose superhero comics were selling poorly in the post-World War II era, noticed *Adventures Into The Unknown*'s horror format, and in 1949 converted *Submariner* to *Amazing Mysteries* with issue #32 and it became the first Marvel/Atlas horror title. A few months later, it changed *Marvel Mystery Comics* into *Marvel Tales*. Next, Marvel transformed *Captain America* into *Captain America's Weird Tales*. Cap appeared in the first issue, going to Hell to fight the Red Skull yet again, but was absent from the final issue (#75).

By 1948, horror comics existed, but hadn't yet made a big splash. And while Marvel and ACG were experimenting with their horror comics, EC was quietly slipping horror stories into the back pages of *Crime Patrol* and *War Against Crime*, and even the stories in their western titles, *Saddle Justice* and *Gunfighter*, took on an increasingly horrific tone before they were canceled.

But a cloud of questions still surround the origins of the EC horror saga. In fact, the idea that EC publisher Bill Gaines came up with the idea of horror comics on his own is still a matter of debate. In a recent interview, Golden Age artist Sheldon Moldoff related how he came to Gaines with an exciting new idea. "Comic books at that time were in a lull, so I came up to see (Bill Gaines)... I said, 'Bill, I've got an idea that I think will be the next trend." After getting the go-ahead from Gaines, Moldoff, "worked up an idea which was horror. I had a couple of titles, *Tales of the Supernatural*, *This Magazine is Haunted*... (Gaines) said, 'Great!' ...and I...produced the first book for him... the cover done by Johnny Craig, a story by Gardner Fox. I did stories in it... I brought it in, gave it to him, he said, 'Terrific.' I said, 'Do you want me to start on the second one?' He said, 'No. I'll let you know when.' And what happened after that was I never heard from him. And about well, say, nine, ten months down the road, on the newsstand I see four other titles...(including) *Crypt of Terror*." The four stories that Moldoff packaged for his prototype horror comic were all eventually used, and one of them, Johnny Craig's "Zombie Terror" (*Moon Girl* #5), is widely credited as the very first EC horror story. But to his great disappointment, Moldoff learned that Gaines had no intention of staying with their deal that would guarantee Moldoff a percentage of the horror comics. "I never saw Bill Gaines after that."

Fortunately for Moldoff, the quality of his work was obvious, and, "About a year down the road I sold the title *This Magazine Is Haunted* to Fawcett Publications, and I did it for about a year or so. I did the covers and a story. I sold them another title called *Worlds of Fear* and they were pretty successful until Fawcett went out of business because of the Captain Marvel law suit."

Despite this beginning, Gaines, along with his talented writer/editor/artist Al Feldstein and a freelance staff that included Jack Davis,

What's so funny about Horror Comics?

by Gary Slusser

Most people don't associate the precode horror comics of the late '40's and early '50's with the term "funny book". The truth is, a lot of attempts, most intentional, some unintentional, were made by the publishers of these books to add humor to the horror formula.

Whether you realize it or not, humor in horror comics is pervasive and necessary for the formula of a horror comic to work right. You need a bit of sugar to take in all of the sourness of what horror comics represent (i.e. murder, violence, revenge, hatred, jealousy, decomposition, dismemberment, etc.)

In the case of intentional humor, Bill Gaines and the crew of EC Comics knew this all too well. Murder and mayhem can be assimilated a lot easier if we are reminded that the events are fictional and humor is a way of telling us all "we're just kidding! Go ahead and have a guilty pleasure and enjoy this horror comic!"

The most obvious use of humor is evident in every EC horror comic that was produced. The horror hosts couldn't speak a single paragraph without hitting on a pun-per-sentence.

One random example comes from the second story in *Haunt of Fear* #17 entitled "Gorilla My Dreams".

The Vaultkeeper's introductory monologue begins:

"Heh, heh! Greetings, boils and gores! Welcome once again to The Vault of Horror! Come in and relax...on that marble slab over there! This is your host in howls, the Vault Keeper, ready to relate another terror-tome from my fabulous collection I call Gorilla My Dreams!"

The horror host also came back at the end of every story with an anecdote about the story just told. In the case of the previously mentioned gorilla story a poor gent named Philip gets his brain transplanted into the body of a gorilla. The Vaultkeeper comments at the end of the story, "Anybody care for a banana? That's the fruit with appeal! Ape appeal! Next time you see a caged gorilla, be kind to him, eh? He may be...Philip!" Well, I think you get the idea.

EC puns at the front and end of a story with terror sandwiched in between is a great meal and helped to lessen the blow of the unsavory contents of the stories.

Harvey horror comics had a fair share of humor in them as well. *Black Cat Comics* did parodies on such movies as "The

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Three Musketeers" and " Moe Gambo". *Chamber Of Chills* and a few *Tomb Of Terrors* had a small 1/2 page running feature entitled Chilly Chambermusic which changed lyrics of popular tunes. One example from *Chamber Of Chills* #20 goes, "Come on a my house, to my house a come on...I'm a gonna give you plenty of lovin' when the light's all gone...But you're gonna scream and holler... and nobody's gonna call you a liar... 'cause when you come on a my house you're gonna look at a real vampire!"

Charlton gave us their version of horror humor by doing story parodies in *The Thing*. Issue #11 does a parody of Hansel and Gretel where the two "children" who are threatened to become dinner for the witch actually turn out to be ghouls who turn the tables on the witch in the end by making her the main course. Ditko also does a great parody of Cinderella in issue #12.

As for unintentional humor, to my knowledge, the smaller comic publishers had no intention of being funny but ended up producing horror comics that were much funnier than the puns of EC could ever be. You will find more of these jewels in comics made by Gilmore, Superior, Ajax Farrell and the like than you will in main publishers like Harvey or EC Comics.

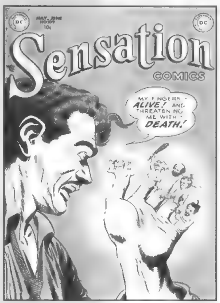
I am not sure if the smaller publishers were more outlandish and bizarre with their plotting than the larger EC or Atlas to gain attention or if they just couldn't afford good story/script writers. In any case, the final product has always been more entertaining to me than the more predictable horror formulas of the larger publishers.

What makes a plot and dialogue unconventional and unintentionally funny?

Dreams and nightmares have no beginning, no ending and no obvious continuity. This is what makes them so humorous in the light of day when we review them. People, locations and situations appear and disappear with no apparent rhyme or reason and always do the unexpected and the absurd. The realm of the non-sequitur lends itself well to unintentional humor. Hence, my preference for some of the smaller horror publishers of the precode era like Superior and Ajax. They didn't feel it was always necessary (or didn't have the writers) to present a textbook story with character motives and development or a beginning, middle and ending in a lot of cases. Anything went, and did. Does this lend itself to humorous situations and dialogue? You bet!

A few examples are in order:

In "The Flat Man" (*Journey Into Fear* *(continued on page 27)*



Johnny Craig, Graham Ingels, Jack Kamen, Joe Orlando, Reed Crandall, Berni Krigstein, and George Evans, produced what are arguably the best horror comics ever. EC's three horror hosts, the Crypt-Keeper, the Vault Keeper and the Old Witch (all inspired by the "Witch's Tale" on radio) have been so widely imitated it's almost *de rigueur* for a horror comic to have a wisecracking host.

None of EC's army of imitators could match the EC blend of snap-endings, explicit gore, and black humor. There were however, some excellent art jobs in the Atlas (Marvel) and ACG horror titles, and some top-notch writing and art from Fawcett comics, notably by artists Bob Powell and future EC great George Evans.

"Fawcett did a very good job on their horror magazine, but it didn't sell as well as Bill Gaines,'" Moldoff recalled. "And I remember a discussion I had with the editor, and I said, 'How come?'"

He said, 'Well, if you read the text, Fawcett will not let us get as far as the Gaines (comics) go, you know, like eating dead flesh ... 'We're horror, but we're not horrible horror.' Whereas Bill Gaines pulled out all the (stops)."

Simon and Kirby, always quick to create or join a profitable trend, chimed in with *Black Magic*, their horror title. It was a memorable effort (memorable enough to be reprinted by DC in the early '70's for a brief two-issue run), but, like the Fawcett horror titles, they were too restrained to reach the same heights EC achieved

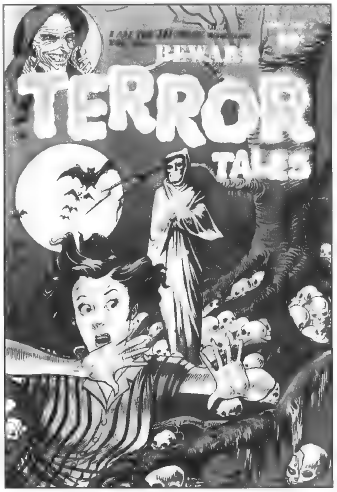
Harvey Comics' horror titles, though they boasted the talents of artists like Howard Nostrand, Bob Powell, Jack Kirby, Joe Simon, and Mort Meskin, suffered from the same sort of bland scripting. In a 1968 interview, Nostrand noted, "Harvey had a sort of chicken attitude about horror stuff. Like, it should be horrible, but not too horrible."

In an effort to outsell EC, however, some of their other competitors often went wild with gory plots and artwork, which forced Gaines and Feldstein to up the ante, resulting in some truly "nauseating" horror tales, such as "Foul Play" in *Haunt of Fear* #19, in which a murdered ballplayer's teammates play ball with the murderer's dismembered body Bill Gaines himself ruefully noted years later that "Foul Play", "...was a bad story, it was a stupid story. It was certainly in bad taste. And I'm sorry we did it, but we did it."

Gaines wasn't the only one who had reservations about some of EC's more outrageous material. As George Evans reminisced in a 1995 interview, even masters of horror like Johnny Craig and Graham Ingels felt that EC was going too far... "I was just at a signing thing with Johnny Craig and it turns out that it did bother him. And I know it bothered Graham Ingels." Evans recalled the infamous severed head cover of *Crime Suspenstories* #22 that Johnny Craig drew, and which Bill Gaines was forced to defend during the Kefauver hearings. Evans noted that Craig, "...said he hadn't wanted to do it, that he tried to get them to change it but they wouldn't, and when it came down to it, he was an

employee and he did it. But he said it did trouble him." Evans, who contributed some remarkably grisly work to the EC horror titles, seemed untroubled by the graphic nature of the materials, "...What we did, everything was sort of tongue in cheek and really for fun, not to scare the hell out of anybody the way Kefauver and that gang and Wertham had it. We would read the mail and I'd go in and find Bill and Al guffawing over some of the mail that came in, because the kids or teenagers, or whoever was reading it evidently took each plot as a challenge, trying to out-think the writer. And the mail would come in and say, 'I had a better ending than that.' And they would run pretty much the same story again and give it a different ending than the one the writer had sent in and expect another letter and usually got it. They actually became, what would you call it? Extended friends of a good many of the people who wrote letters in."

But, after four years of non-stop gore and violence, many parents had had enough of flesh-eating ghouls, vampires, walking corpses, and sundry other atrocities that consigned junior's comics to the bonfire. In April, 1954, a headline-seeking psychiatrist named Frederic Wertham threw gasoline on the flames with his slanted, sensationalistic *Seduction of the Innocent*, which blamed comics for juvenile delinquency. Other writers chimed in, and eventually the U.S. Senate convened hearings on Juvenile Delinquency in which horror comics (EC in particular) were singled out for criticism. By the end of 1954, the self-censoring Comics Code was in effect. It prohibited exactly the kind of horror comics that had been most successful, including specifically, the words "Horror" and "Terror" and all "scenes dealing with, or instruments associated with walking dead, torture, vampires and vampirism, ghouls, cannibalism and werewolfism".



Horror titles fell as if cut down by the Grim Reaper's scythe. Gaines canceled all of EC's horror and shock comics and inaugurated a Code-approved "New Direction" line that included wholesome, uplifting fare like *M.D.* and *Psychoanalysis*.

But by the end of 1955, Bill Gaines was out of the comics business, concentrating on his magazines. That eventually consisted solely of *MAD*, but briefly included a bold experiment in graphic fiction that had the potential of changing American horror comics if their promise had been realized. Gaines tried to circumvent the Comics Code with his "Picto-Fiction" titles. *Shock Illustrated*. *Horror Illustrated*. and two other titles all featured drawings illustrating typeset blocks of text.

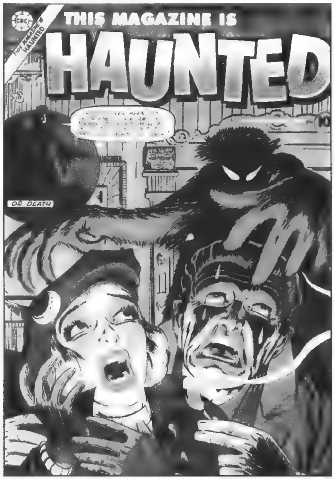
***Horrific* #10 (Mar 1954), cover by Don Heck; *Beware Terror Tales* #7 (May 1953), was the 2nd to the last issue of this Fawcett run; a scarce copy of *Sensation* #109 (May/Jun 1952).**

As George Evans recalled, the new format encouraged EC's craftsmen to experiment with different styles and drawing media that they could have used in comics. "They wanted a variety of styles for the illustrations, so everybody was fooling around with halftones and wash drawings and coquille board, you know, surfaced boards, and trying for a different technique." Unfortunately, none of them lasted beyond two issues, with the exception of *Shock Illustrated*, which died with the poorly distributed (and now rare) third issue.

Horror comics were officially dead, though a few highly sanitized "mystery" titles like DC's *House of Mystery*, Charlton's *Tales of the Mysterious Traveler*, AGG's *Adventures Into the Unknown* and Marvel's *Journey Into Mystery* were still being published. These comics mostly concentrated on stories of aliens, time travel, and in Marvel's case especially, giant monsters with unpronounceable names mostly drawn by Jack Kirby. Throughout the late '50's and early '60's, horror comics were clearly in decline.

But in other media, the publication of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine, television's "Shock Theater" package of old Universal horror movies, and Aurora's monster model kits created a wave of monster mania among America's youth in the late '50's and early '60's. *Famous Monsters* publisher Jim Warren was quick to see the appetite that existed for horror magazines and soon inaugurated other horror zines. He also had the editor of *Monster World* concoct a six-page story adapting the Boris Karloff classic film, "The Mummy", illustrated by Wallace Wood and Joe Orlando. The response this generated convinced Warren it was time to bring back horror comics.

Slightly preceding Warren's black and white horror comics were several Western Publishing titles put out under the Gold Key label. *Twilight Zone* and *Boris Karloff Tales of Mystery* are highlights of early '60's horror comics that are rarely mentioned in most histories of the genre. The reason for this is the literate but unfortunately rather bland writing inflicted on the titles by Western Publishing's wholesome editorial policies. What makes them worthy of mention, however, is the top-notch stable of freelancer artists who worked on the early issues (#1-51), including EC alums like Reed Crandall, Alex Toth, Al Williamson, George Evans, Frank Frazetta, Angelo Torres, Joe Orlando, and Wallace Wood... along with the excellent Al McWilliams and John Celardo. The issues from the mid-to-late '70's feature good younger artists as well, like Alan Weiss, Walt Simonson, Frank Miller and Sandy Plunkett... plus an occasional new Williamson story.



Charlton bought this title from Fawcett and carried on with some classic Ditko covers. (Above #17, Sep 1954.)

One of the other bright spots of this era was Charlton's *Gorgo* title, based on the British giant monster flick of the same name, and drawn by the talented Steve Ditko. Ditko also contributed to the second issue of *Konga*, an adaptation of another British monster flick, that featured a monster ape who trashes London (Hmm, I wonder if Konga's creators ever saw King Kong?)

Warren began publishing *Creepy* in 1964 as a black and white magazine beyond the reach of the Comics Code. The cadaverous but genial Uncle Creepy hosted the book, making bad puns and insulting his own employer in an obvious attempt to evoke the EC formula. Still, as copies go, Warren's contributors initially did a first class job. Publisher Jim Warren was aided in his creation of *Creepy* by versatile horror veteran Joe Orlando, who received the credit "story ideas by Joe Orlando" in the first issue. Editor Russ Jones was quickly replaced by the Archie Goodwin, who also wrote most of the early scripts for a stable of freelancers headlined by Jack Davis. The talented Davis did the first cover and some interior illustrations of Uncle Creepy before departing the horror biz for the greener fields of advertising and movie poster artwork. This amazing group of freelancers also featured the legendary Frank Frazetta, drawing his last comics stories here before switching exclusively to covers.

Frazetta and Davis were abetted by a horde of talented contributors that included Al Williamson, Roy Krenkel, Reed Crandall, John Severin, Johnny Craig, George Evans, Joe Orlando, Angelo Torres, Alex Toth, Steve Ditko (doing possibly his best work ever for Warren), Gene Colan, Gray Morrow, and Neal Adams. The first dozen issues of *Creepy* contained adaptations of classic horror stories by writers like Poe, Ambrose Bierce, Bram Stoker, and "Eando" Binder (pseudonym for the Binder brothers), augmented by original scripts from Goodwin and Craig, among others.

Creepy's success quickly prompted the creation of a companion title. Cousin Eerie (also designed by Davis) was disgustingly corpulent where Creepy was lean, but beyond their surface appearances, Creepy and Eerie (like the contents of their magazines) seemed interchangeable. Warren's success eventually inspired some decidedly inferior imitations from other publishers, with titles like *Weird, Chilling Tales Of Horror, Stark Terror, Witches' Tales, Horror Tales*, and others offbeat titles which took up space on the newsstands through the mid-'70's.

Dell Comics made a stab at horror comics in the '60's, starting first with an anemic adaptation of *The Creature From the Black Lagoon*. Things brightened up considerably with the publication of the now scarce Dell 25¢ Giant *Tales From the Tomb*, written, oddly enough by Little Lulu creator John Stanley. Comics historian Mike Benton admiringly refers to *Tales From the Tomb* as, "some of the scariest horror comic stories ever written." Alas, most of the Dell horror titles that followed, including adaptations of Frankenstein, Dracula and The Wolf Man suffered from less-than-appealing scripts and art.

Warren Publishing's next innovation a few years later was to prove one of the most successful variations on the horror anthology formula. *Vampirella* debuted in 1969, with her portrait by Frank Frazetta gracing the cover. What made Vampi truly different was the combination of sex and horror in her book. (Though Johnny Craig had experimented with giving the Vault Keeper a sexy assistant named Drusilla, beginning in *Vault of Horror* #37 in 1954). Vampi wore a backless, centerless outfit (designed by underground artist Trina Robbins) that left little to the imagination. Originally written by *Famous Monsters* editor Forrest J. Ackerman with a jokey tone, and drawn in a cartoony style by Tom Sutton, the first Vampi stories gave her origin as a native of Drakulon, a planet of vampires. (It seems Drakulon's rivers of blood had dried up.) The jokey tone disappeared when Archie Goodwin took over the scripting, with artist Jose Gonzales stepping in to create what many feel is still the definitive rendition of Vampi. Goodwin's Vampirella stories were followed by good scripts from

T. Casey Brennan, and the always-reliable Doug Moench. Vampi's main antagonists in her early outings were Lovecraftian monsters. Count Dracula, and her own blood-hungry nature.

That same year, another black and white magazine appeared that was significant for other reasons. *Web of Horror* featured the work of younger artists like Berni Wrightson, Michael Kaluta, and Jeff Jones in a conscious attempt to bring back EC-style horror.

In a 1980 interview Michael Kaluta remembered *Web of Horror* this way, "We were having a ball. Things were coming together and it looked like EC all over again. And then, the problem being of course, that the publisher was not into it. The publisher was into girlie magazines. This was a little thing on the side that Terry Bisson wanted to do. So it didn't get distributed. And it ended up one day, by the time Berni Wrightson and Bruce Jones had become the editors of the thing, they went up one day and the place was empty. The guy had moved."

Despite their enthusiastic visions of recreating the EC mythos and some good early art by Wrightson, Kaluta et. al., *Web of Horror* expired after three issues... done in by the aforementioned promotion and distribution problems, scripts that were too derivative, and the seriously limited appeal of Webster, the title's cartoony spider host.

Another horrific highlight of 1969, was the appearance of "Nightmaster" in DC's *Showcase* #83 and 84. Drawn with moody intensity by Berni Wrightson (with an assist from friends Jeff Jones, Michael Kaluta, and Steve Harper) and scripted by Denny O'Neil, "Nightmaster" was ostensibly a sword and sorcery strip, but there were enough monsters (flying brains!) and other nightmarish elements to show where Wrightson's heart was. Alas. Nightmaster's two appearances are his only ones to date. The character has never been revived.

Now a high demand collectible, Stan Lee's *Monsters To Laugh With* (#3,1965 above) relied on a mixture of Hollywood horror and painful puns.

By the early 1970s there were a host of other black and white horror mags, including some promising offerings from Skywald: *Psycho*, *Nightmare* (featuring nice artwork by Wrightson, Kaluta and Doug Wildey) ,and a stillborn revival of *The Heap*. They continued to slog along for several years until the horror boom of the '70s petered out. Most vanished by mid-decade, although there would be periodic attempts to revive black and white horror comics such as the four issues of *Monsters Attack!* in 1989, which featured artwork by Severin, Toth, Ditko and Gray Morrow.

With a few notable exceptions really hard-edged horror comics didn't

WHAT'S SO FUNNY? *(from page 24)*

#19), a man faints in the middle of the street only to be run over by a drunken steam roller driver. The man gets up, flatter than a pancake but feeling great, kills the errant steam roller driver and goes home to see his wife. The dialogue goes like this:

"I don't understand this at all! I'm crushed absolutely flat, yet I feel fine! Better than I have in years! But I'd better get home and call a doctor just the same!

"I wonder how Sarah will take this? Going to be quite a shock for a wife when the husband comes home flat!

Flat broke, maybe she could understand, but just flat was too much for Sarah to take."

Sarah thinks adjusting to a one dimensional mate would be too difficult and gets a divorce. The flat man discovers the neat trick of sliding under bank door jams to rob them and gets rich. He gets a second wife with his money (shock, the wife is attracted to his money and not his cute, flat features) and tries to flatten her under a steam roller so that they look alike. He trips and gets run over with her. This time he doesn't get up. The epilogue of the story:

"and so they were really married at last! Or do we mean buried? Anyway, they became as close as two people can get! They became truly one! Rolled into the final embrace, a red sludge in the road, no one can ever part them again! Not even the undertaker!"

(Side note here on *Out Of The Shadows* #7. Believe it or not, this book also has a story about a man that gets run over by a steam roller and lives to tell about it, but one per article is enough!)

In "The Fangs of Fate" Dr. Kissack, the unpopular keeper of the local snake farm, kills a man for trying to have him deported and feeds him to his prize Python. The snake grows and somehow communicates with the doctor that he wants more humans to eat. The doctor provides a few and the Python grows and grows. (sound vaguely similar to that Roger Corman movie "Little Shop of Horrors" that came out six years later?) Now comes the humor...

The snake breaks out of his barn and is chasing the doctor. The doctor, finding no victim at hand with which to feed the snake, runs frantically and stops in front of a shop that says Undertaker. The doctor says:

"Perhaps I can buy a corpse here at the undertaker, and...Great Heavens!"

What the heck was this guy thinking?

Anyway, I'll finish the story. The snake is shot and killed, the Doc goes home and the villagers burn his house down with him in it. A couple of teenagers examine the burnt ruins of the house when a single small snake emerges. One teenager exclaims, "Hey! What a crazy looking snake! It...it looks just like Dr. Kissack! Let's get out of here!" Ah! You really got your dimes' worth in '53!

In "Recruits for the Legion of the Undead" (*Beyond* #11), Kip is working his way through med school by being the night

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watchman at the City Morgue. Five hobos have been killed on this particular day and are tucked away in the holding drawers. He hears a tapping and pulls open one of the drawers. One of the hobos emerges and says, "Thank you, friend! Sorry to make such a rumpus, but I had to get out! I must release the others now, too!"

Kip replies, "Wait! Stop! You can't do this! It don't understand!"

Dead hobo to rest of dead hobos, "Hurry, friends! We have to get out of here!"

Kip intelligently says, "Can't let those grisly corpses get out of the morgue! Hey, you guys! Come back here!"

If you must know the end of the story, the hobos were experiments of a mad doctor who brought them back to life with brain shock therapy and vultures' blood. He sics his pet vultures on Kip but they much prefer the flesh of the dead hobos and attack them instead. Kip uses this opportunity to turn a ray gun on the evil doctor. Finis.

Voodoo #12 has an amazing first entitled "Skulls of Doom" in it, a doctor is trying to find a brain to swap with a 5,000 year old (still active) brain that is due back to the original owner who is walking around with the top half of his skull missing, searching for it. The doctor goes back to the medical school that he graduated from and hits up the Dean of the med school for a free, "used" brain. The dialogue goes like this:

Doctor to Dean: "Hello, Dean Baxter, I wonder if you could do me a favor? I need a brain – just any old brain will do."

Dean to Doctor· "I think we can manage that for one of our most brilliant graduates – come with me to the dissecting room!"

This is news to me! I wasn't aware that one of the perks of being a doctor was that you could get free used organs just for the asking. Why, just a few livers alone sold to some Hollywood stars could set you up for life!

Let's Go Bowling!

In Horrific #6 (also reprinted in *Weird Terror* #13 - for a publisher who only published a total of 27 precode horror books, *Comic Media* did a LOT of reprinting of it's stories, but I digress) a wife is upset with her husband because he is spending every night at the bowling alley and ignoring her and the kids. The husband decides to get her interested in bowling to get her to stop bothering him about his habit.

She takes immediately to the pizza, beer and comfortable bowling shirts and is drawn into the insidious addiction of bowling. She proceeds to get a babysitter every night for the kids and spend all of her food shopping allowance on her new addiction. The kids go hungry. The babysitter quits. The husband eventually loses his mind and you can guess the rest. I'm surprised that Dr. Wertham never mentioned bowling addiction in his articles. He must have missed this issue.

I hope that I have made my point… mainly that comic collectors can actually find a chuckle or two in horror comics. So grab yourself a horror comic and have a good laugh! ■

come from the mainstream. The late '60s and early '70s saw a handful of horror titles emerge from the psychedelic chaos of Underground Comics whose effects are still resonating throughout the horror genre to this day. *Bogeyman*, by the certifiably insane Rory Hayes, led the Underground horror invasion. It was soon followed by *Skull*, featuring work by the brilliant and twisted Greg Irons. The gory, violent *Skull* pulled no punches in stories like its adaptations of Lovecraft's "Pickman's Model" or "Rats In the Walls." Horror historian and connoisseur Steve Bissette fondly recalled, "*Skull* #6… that's the only comic that ever prompted me to drop it on the ground when I got to one of the shock climaxes." *Skull* was joined by a small number of other underground horrors like *Slow Death*, Tom Veitch's *Deviant Slice*, and *Two-Fisted Zombies*. Airbrush master Richard Corben's horror work for the undergrounds soon earned him a place in the Warren stable, and he worked on all three of Warren's horror magazines.

The angled view on Strange Tales #79 (Dec 1960) was inked by Steve Ditko.

"Without the undergrounds, what is happening now with Vertigo, the spate of Clive Barker adaptations in comics that we had a couple years ago, the work that Alan (Moore) and myself and John (Totleben) did on *Swamp Thing* makes no sense," Bissette astutely observed, adding, "You have to include the very powerful influence that the undergrounds had on a whole generation of cartoonists and also, more importantly in terms of horror comics… the undergrounds really picked up the banner that had been dropped in 1954 by EC, and they picked it up with more vigor and energy and venom and power than the Warren line was ever going to approach."

By the early '70s horror again became a hot commodity to the point where EC comics were revived by East Coast Comix, which reprinted a dozen different ECs, including the final issue of *Tales From the Crypt*, which was printed as Bill Gaines had originally intended back in 1954, as *Crypt of Terror* #1.

Marvel responded with a spate of color comics accompanied by black and white titles like *Dracula Lives!* and *Tales of the Zombie*. Marvel's horror anthologies, both color and black and white, leaned heavily on reprints of Code-approved horror material from the fifties by artists such as the late Joe Maneely, interspersed with frequently excellent new stories drawn by Gil Kane, Barry Smith, Wallace Wood, and Herb Trimpe. Jim Steranko's graphically innovative "At The Stroke of Midnight" in *Tower of Shadows* #1, was a partic-

ular highlight. Marvel's stable of continuing horror characters, which included *Monster of Frankenstein* (boasting moody, atmospheric artwork by Michael Ploog in the first six issues), *Werewolf by Night* and *Son of Satan*, produced one certified masterpiece. *Tomb of Dracula*, written by Marv Wolfman and illustrated by Gene Colan and Tom Palmer, is one of the absolute pinnacles of the '70's horror boom. Horror maven Steve Bissette calls *Tomb of Dracula* #1-70, "the first American horror graphic novel… All seventy issues combined form a complete, coherent, and very entertaining and engaging graphic novel… It really needs to be pulled out of there and looked at on its own merit because it's just a brilliant body of work." Wolfman and Colan attempted to duplicate their *Tomb of Dracula* success at DC in 1982, with *Night Force*, a series about a team of paranormal investigators. Despite solid scripts and art by Wolfman and Colan it failed after 14 issues.

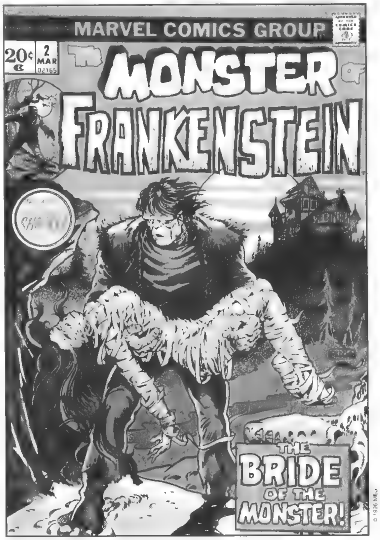
In 1968 DC's Editorial Director, Carmine Infantino, promoted Joe Orlando from artist to editor. By the '70s Orlando had vastly expanded their stable of mystery titles to include such oddities as *Weird Western* and *Weird War*. Of this latter title, Orlando noted in a 1975 interview, "War is horror anyway, and I wanted to do a book that concentrated on the horror of war–to show what a nightmare the whole thing is. I combined a lot of what I learned on the mystery books into this one."

House of Mystery went from being the home of goofy series like "Dial H For Hero", to being a dank and mysterious mansion inhabited by horror host Cain, a saturnine, goateed fiend who had a particularly unpleasant relationship with his rotund brother, Abel. "I immediately changed the logo to make *House of Mystery* more prominent, and to make it a mystery book… but modeled after the old horror books… primarily because I knew from my EC experience that the horror books were carrying the company… I worked within the Code by looking for its openings, not its restrictions, and gradually developed my own limits by starting with simple monster stories. In fact, the first couple of issues even used old DC reprints of their very tame 1950's monster stuff.

"My principal writer was Jack Oleck, who Bill Gaines recommended to me. Jack had done some work for the EC horror line. And of course, both Dick Giordano and I spent a lot of our time developing new writers and artists: Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, Berni Wrightson, Mike Kaluta and so on."

Joe Orlando oversaw a horror renaissance that brought artists like Wally Wood, Alex Toth, Neal Adams, Russ Heath, Gil Kane, George Evans, Steve Ditko, Gene Colan, Gray Morrow, and Orlando himself, into titles like *House of Secrets*, *Ghosts*, *Ghost Manor*, *Secrets of Haunted House*, and others too numerous to mention them all individually. "Swamp Thing began with my fondness for Otto Binder's 'Adam Link, Robot' stories (which Orlando had illustrated for both EC and Warren) and my desire to create a character with a similar alienated feeling. The first story… the one in *House of Secrets* #92 was done like any other mystery story… I talked it out with Len Wein, he wrote it, and I gave it to Berni Wrightson to draw. But the reader response was so great that I talked Carmine into letting us do it as a book." *Swamp Thing* made Wrightson one of the first comics superstars of the '70's. Wrightson had led the way at DC for an invasion of talented newcomers. Michael Kaluta, Howard Chaykin, Bruce Jones, Dan Green, Alan Weiss, et al didn't quite recreate the EC mythos, but from the early to mid-'70's Wrightson and his cohorts produced some of the best-looking horror comics in the business. Kaluta went on to draw more *House of Mystery* covers than anyone, including the cover for the final issue, #321.

Michael Kaluta is easily one of the most neglected names in the history of horror, who besides drawing dozens and dozens of covers for DC's mystery titles, brought his particular gifts of romantic realism, visually dazzling storytelling and a superb sense of design to any comics story he tackled no matter how mundane the script. Kaluta's three installments



Mike Ploog drew this version of Mary Shelley's creation during Marvel's horror renaissance. (#2, Mar 1973.)

of "Spawn of Frankenstein" in *Phantom Stranger* #23-25 are minor classics that are not often noted in histories of the horror genre, but are worth mentioning here. Discerning connoisseurs of good comics art would be well-advised to seek them out.

The short-lived Atlas-Seaboard line had a number of horror-oriented comics, as well as some black and white magazines. Although the Atlas line employed many of comics' top artists, including Russ Heath, Neal Adams, Wallace Wood, Steve Ditko, Howard Chaykin, John Severin, and Berni Wrightson, they were not always used to *continued on page 79*

On April 23, 1954, the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency convened to put the comic industry on trial. This was a very high profile and well publicized investigation into a seemingly otherwise benign industry. Tension against the comic industry had been building... and was further fueled when Dr. Fredric Wertham published his first article in the May 29th issue of *The Saturday Review Of Literature*. Dr. Wertham suggested that there was a correlation between the increase in violent juvenile delinquency and the crime and horror comic books that these children were avidly reading. He had based these findings on his own clinical studies conducted at the Lafargue Clinic in Harlem, which he founded in 1946. To add fuel to an already smoldering fire, the release of Dr. Wertham's book *Seduction Of The Innocent* coincided with the convening of the Senate Judiciary Hearings. *SOTI* was an instant best seller!

The hearings were sensationalized by the media and became a highly charged political affair. Senator Estes Kefauver had dreams of the White House. His position as Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee (investigating organized crime in America) provided the perfect position to galvanize the "public outcry" against this "abomination that the comic industry had created." As any self respecting politician would, Kefauver seized his opportunity to exploit public opinion and formed the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency. His battle cry: "save America's youth!"

When Kefauver's political ambitions were combined with the outspoken accusations of Dr. Wertham... a "witch hunt" was created with comic publishers branded as the villains. Every horror, fear, and prejudice of the McCarthy era increased pressure from concerned parents. Convinced they had sufficient reason to blame comics for the destruction of the American youth, parents from all over the country demanded that the Government "do something" to control the "runaway" comic book industry. Local legislation had already been enacted by many cities to ban horror and crime comics from their newsstands. Something had to be done on a national level!

After two days of testimony in April by those for and those against the comic industry, the Senate Subcommittee reconvened in June to deliberate their findings. Dr. Wertham's court testimony (along with his descriptions of the lurid evils that lurked within the pages of comics) was enough to convince the Subcommittee that something needed to be done to curtail "this industry with no social conscience."

THE CODE KILLED THE EC HORR COMI

"The power of human violence is very great, not only on the direct victims but in its influence on the orientation of a whole society as well." —Dr. Fredric Wertham

BY
PHIL
BARNHART

LAST
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The mandate was handed down. Although it was against the Constitution's amendment guaranteeing free speech to "officially" enact legislation against the comic industry, the message was still very clear. In Senator Hendrickson's (a member of the subcommittee) own words:

"I think I speak for the entire committee when I say that any action on the part of the distributors, wholesalers, or dealers with reference to these materials which will tend to eliminate them from production and sale, shall receive the acclaim of myself and my colleagues. A competent job of self policing will achieve much."

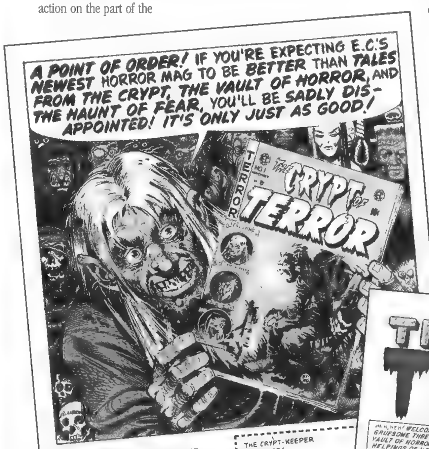
In short, the comic industry was teetering on the brink of utter destruction as politicians actually encouraged the restraint of free trade as a form of censorship!

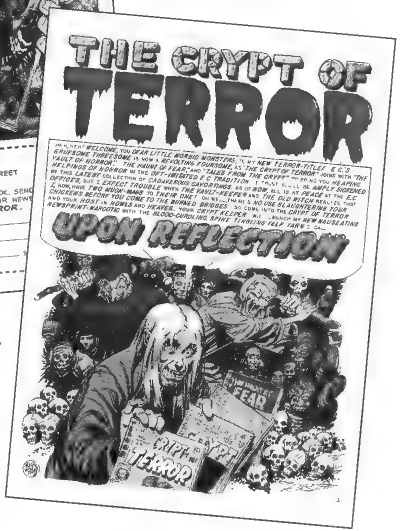
A fearful group of comic book publishers rallied to put together a self appointed group (or self-censorship group if you will) that would review all material slated for publication. Only if said material was sanitized or deemed "decent for children" would it receive the all important stamp, "Approved By The Comics Code Authority". The Code Authority was enacted in April of 1955

It was not mandatory to obtain the Code Authority's approval for publication of any comic, in fact Dell Comics never saw the need to obtain approval since they were doing comics featuring Disney characters. However, publishers did find it necessary to obtain the Code Authority approval if they wanted to sell anything other than Duck or Mice comics! Distributors, wholesalers, and retailers were intimidated into refusing to handle any type of magazine that did not carry the Comics Code stamp of approval, especially horror and crime comics!

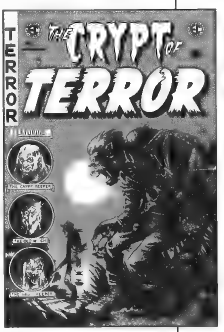
Comic magazine censorship was now a fact. For EC

"IT'S ONLY JUST AS GOOD!" was the clever lead line Bill Gaines used in the *Crypt Of Terror* subscription ad at left. Although advertised and written for (see below), EC's fourth horror title, *The Crypt Of Terror* was never published. On facing page, the original cover for *Crypt Of Terror* #1.


A POINT OF ORDER! IF YOU'RE EXPECTING E.C.'S NEWEST HORROR MAG TO BE BETTER THAN TALES FROM THE CRYPT, THE VAULT OF HORROR, AND THE HAUNT OF FEAR, YOU'LL BE SADLY DISAPPOINTED! IT'S ONLY JUST AS GOOD!
TALES FROM THE CRYPT
TERROR
INVESTIGATE YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND FOR THE FIRST "JUST-AS-GOOD" ISSUE! HOWEVER IF YOU'RE TIED UP WITH RED TAPE (ADHESIVE, THAT IS!) AND YOU'D RATHER SUBSCRIBE, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IN, TOGETHER WITH AN UNDOCTORED PHOTO OF GEORGE WASHINGTON ON A $100 BILL. YOU'LL RECEIVE 8 UNCROPPED ISSUES IN THE MAIL
THE CRYPT-KEEPER
BOOM. 106
225 LAFAYETTE STREET
N.Y.C. 13, N.Y.
HERE'S MY BUCK. SEND 8 ISSUES OF YOUR NEWS CRYPT OF TERROR.
NAME
ADDRESS
CITY



this meant extermination. EC Comics were so entrenched in the horror and crime genre that they had no hope of "cleaning up their act". They knew full well that their type of magazine would never make it past the Comics Code Authority. They were forced to close out their horror and crime comic titles such as; *Tales From The Crypt*, *The Vault of Horror*, *The Haunt of Fear*, *Crime Suspenstories*, and *Shock Suspenstories* while continuing with their new direction titles. You can sense the frustration that the editors experienced over this helpless situation from this letter which appeared on the inside front cover of *Tales From The Crypt* #46… the last horror comic that EC ever published! The entire contents of this issue was slated to appear in their new horror magazine, *The Crypt of Terror* #1, it was killed before it was ever born!



Even with its new direction magazines, EC found it difficult to get their material past the Comics Code Authority. The Code Authority was especially tough on EC. A well known example is found in the case of a science fiction story from *Weird Fantasy* #18 titled "Judgement Day". It's the classic story of a planet inhabited by blue robots and orange robots. Clearly the orange robots consider themselves superior to the blue robots and intend to keep them in their PLACE! A space galaxy investigator visits the planet to see if they are ready for admission into the galactic empire. He decides they are not, based on this prejudice that he has witnessed. The last scene has the space investigator inside his ship staring out at the stars as he is removing his space helmet, he was African American! Racial equality existed in the universe! The Comics Code Authority didn't think so, they did not want him to be a minority!

In some cases the Comics Code Authority overstepped its boundaries and got a little over zealous in its interpretation of what was considered decent and wholesome reading for the kiddies. Without a doubt, this self imposed censorship of the comic industry forced many publishers out of business, but without the Code's protection the entire industry may have fallen under the crushing wheels of public outcry. Once the hysteria over the "social indecency" of comics had settled, this newly sanitized industry found itself missing some of its most familiar members. Among those was EC comics.

Ironically, EC has become the standard by which all other horror comics are judged. Ask any collector… EC comics are *the* horror classics… including the very last one! ■

This article was submitted by The Comic Archives, a shoppe dedicated to comic history and nostalgia! You can read more about The Comics Code Authority and Dr. Wertham in CBM *#10 & #29.*

Bill Gaines letter to readers from Tales From The Crypt #46

You may never read this magazine. For that matter, this magazine may never be printed. If it is printed, it may never be distributed. If it is distributed, it may be kept in a bundle behind the counter and never see the light of day. But if, through some miracle, it does reach the newsstand, this will probably be the last issue of this magazine you will ever read.

As a result of the hysterical, injudicious, and unfounded charges leveled at crime and horror comics, many retailers and wholesalers throughout the country have been intimidated into refusing to handle this type of magazine.

Although we at EC still believe, as we have in the past, that the charges against horror and crime comics are utter nonsense, there's no point in going into a defense of this kind of literature at the present time. Economically our situation is acute. Magazines that do not get onto the newsstands do not sell. We are forced to capitulate. We give up. WE'VE HAD IT!

Naturally, with comic magazine censorship now a fact, we at EC look forward to an immediate drop in the crime and juvenile delinquency rate of the United States. We trust there will be fewer robberies, fewer murders, and fewer rapes!

We would like to say in passing . . . passing away, this is! … that if you have enjoyed reading EC's horror and crime efforts over the past five years half as much as we have truly enjoyed creating them for you, then our labors of love have not been in vain.

But enough mush! This is not only an obituary notice; it is also a birth announcement!

BOY … WHAT WE GOT IN STORE FOR YOU! (Ya didn't think EC was gonna die with the books, did ya? We got talent we ain't even used yet!)

EC is planning the NEW NEW TREND. In January of 1955, we hit! In fact, we hit with five (5) sensational new titles. They won't be horror magazines . . . they won't be crime magazines! They'll be utterly new and different-but in the old reliable EC tradition! Naturally, we can't tell you what they'll be YET … we can feel the hot breath of our floundering competitors who followed us into horror on our necks. When the mags are ready to go, they'll be announced in MAD, PANIC, WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY, PIRACY, and TWO-FISTED TALES!

We feel it's gonna be a HAPPY NEW YEAR with our NEW NEW TREND!

Your grateful editors

P.S. The material in the issue you're about to read was originally scheduled for the first issue of EC's fourth horror mag . . . THE CRYPT OF TERROR! (You may have seen it advertised!) This magazine was killed before it was born! We're sorry!-ed

History of The Phantom

by Ed Rhoades

For those who came in late – 400 years ago, a merchant ship was attacked by vicious Singh pirates. After seeing his father murdered, the captain's son escaped, becoming the sole survivor of the raid. When he washed up on a remote beach, he was befriended by the deadly Bandar pygmy tribe from the jungles of Bangalla. One day, while walking on the beach, he spotted the corpse of his father's killer, still dressed in the captain's stolen coat. After vultures had stripped the bones of the pirate, the young man swore an oath on the skull of the killer to fight piracy, injustice, and cruelty in all of its forms-with his descendants each taking a turn in the battle, making him appear immortal to outsiders. To strike fear in the hearts of evildoers, he adopted a mysterious costume inspired by the Wasaka jungle idol, complete with a purple hooded skintight outfit.

With a skull ring, a goodmark ring, a skull throne, a great white stallion named Hero, and loyal wolf named Devil, he makes his home in a skull cave in the deep woods, but his travels establish him as a mysterious hero known in jungles, cities, land, sky, and seas.

Although the Phantom has been featured in a significant number of comic books, it is in comic strips where his success has been unequaled.

To understand the demographics of comic books and comic strips requires examining some very complex and compound issues. The two mediums certainly appear similar, but the differences are of vital importance.

Newspaper strips need to appeal to adults who buy and read the papers, but they have to be suitable for the whole family as well. They need to be simple enough to be read in 30 seconds, the lines should be clean, and the artwork attractive and interesting. For them, familiarity is an integral selling point.

Comics on the other hand have a more specialized target audience. They can show more detail, and build tension, rather than be forced to have each three or four frames compete with other comic offerings. Their catchy part is the cover and the hook at the end to make readers want to see the next issue. Some comics are built for younger audiences while others appeal to older readers

Physically, comic strips fit a different format and have much less flexibility. Imagination and bold graphics are essential for longevity.

"The Phantom" first appeared in the newspapers on February 17, 1936, a time when entirely different sensibilities were embraced by readers. Before the emergence of TV, two very important sources of adventure stories were radio shows and pulps.

Lee Falk was a young aspiring playwright who wrote stories for a St. Louis radio station that featured shows about pulp favorites like the Spider and the Shadow. This experience combined with his eye for theater gave his comic strips "Mandrake, the Magician" and "The Phantom" a depth with an uncommonly broad appeal.

The first Phantom strip began with Diana besting a man in a boxing bout. The adventurous young lady is kidnapped by villains and the story hits the ground running. The actual drawing, rough by today's standards, was done by Falk himself for the first few weeks.

The hero was first shown emerging from the water to rescue Diana from the ship. His attire was a skintight grey body suit with a hood, somewhat reminiscent of an executioner.

This marked the first appearance of a costumed hero in a comic strip, predating and certainly influencing others like Superman, Batman, and Spider-Man.

As the strip gained momentum, the outfit lost the black gloves and became more stylized and defined under the hands of artist, Ray Moore, who had worked as Phil Davis' assistant on Falk's other adventure strip, Mandrake the Magician. Moore's dramatic brushwork had an excitement about it, and his women were beautiful and expressive. Falk continued to contribute some rough layouts for awhile, and his powerful idea of placing the Phantom in a jungle as well as urban settings made the strip unique.

When the Phantom made his way into the Sunday strips, his costume became purple, but was represented differently in many other countries

At a time when comics were recreations of newspaper strips, the Phantom made his first appearance in a comic book in Italy in 1938. This comic featured the first story, "The Singh Brotherhood." Italy's love affair with the Phantom continued as they published thousands more comics and continued importing the strip. During Mussolini's reign, he outlawed all American comics, but the demand for the Phantom

elicited a creation of a Phantom like comic called *The Masked Lauman*. When this failed to satisfy the Italian appetite for Falk's character, Federico Fellini, himself, penned unlicensed Phantom stories for Italians. These strips had a strong resemblance to Ray Moore's artwork.

In 1938, the Phantom was one of the comic strips featured in *Ace Comics* and began his US comic debut in a brown costume which quickly switched to purple. The later *Ace Comics* had Phantom covers drawn by Wilson McCoy.

The Phantom finally got his own comic in the US in 1941, also using the very first adventure "The Singh Brotherhood," which was printed sequentially in *Feature Book* #20 and #22 . A reprint of these now pricey and rare comics was recently published by Pacific Comics.

The Phantom evoked such a response, that related items were produced... including premiums, cards, figurines, pins, rings, games and the like. All of these items are now highly prized as collectibles by Phantom enthusiasts today.

In 1943, Columbia released a fifteen-chapter serial starring Tom Tyler. A pilot was produced for a Phantom TV series in the '60's but never aired. Although the Phantom has been featured in a few cartoon series, the character never enjoyed the multi-media popularity of lesser-known comic heroes.

During the wartime, Moore's friend, commercial artist Wilson McCoy, took over the artistic responsibilities of the strip. McCoy's style copied Moore's initially, but later evolved into simple, stylized but often elegant renderings. Much of his work was based on photographic reference making the proportions of the figures less heroic than the exaggerated superheroes that became commonplace in comics. Some of the finest work attributed to Moore was actually McCoy's work.

McCoy's Phantom artwork can be found in later *Feature Books*, Aces, Harveys, and reprints issued by Pioneer and Pacific comics as well as the Whitman hardback, *Son of the Phantom* published and reprinted in the mid 1940's. (This book's illustrations were incorrectly credited to Moore.)

In the '50s, strips illustrated by Moore and McCoy found their way into *Harvey Comics Hits* and

CLOSEUP OF THE FIERY COVER
of Feature Book #39 (1944) by an unknown artist. One of the most difficult of all Feature Books to find, it features the classic Ray Moore/Lee Falk story "Little Toma".

BIG LITTLE BOOKS & BETTER LITTLE BOOKS TOP TO BOTTOM: ***The Phantom and Desert Justice*** **(1941);** ***The Phantom and the Sign of the Skull*** **(1939);** ***The Phantom and the Girl of Mystery*** **(1947);** ***The Phantom*** **(1936).**

CBM CHECKLIST

PHANTOM COMICS (United States)

Ace Comics #11-151 (1937-1949)
Eat Right To Work & Win (1942)
Feature Books (David McKay 1941-1949) #20, #22, #39, #53, #56, #57
Future Books (David McKay 1940) #1-4
King Comics (David McKay 1936-1952) most issues from #61-159
Harvey Comics Hits (Harvey Publications 1951-1952) #51 & #56
Harvey Hits (Harvey Publications 1957-1967) #1, #6, #2, #15, #26, #36, #44, #48
Mandrake the Magician (King Comics 1966-1967) #1-4 (#1-3 had Phantom stories, #4 had girl Phantom story)
Golden Age Of Comics (Nostalgia Press 1969)
Gold Key (Western Publishing 1962) #1-17
King #18-28
Charlton #30-74, #1-13
The Phantom Goes to War (Quintessence 1973)
Phantom Sundays (Pioneer 1989) 1-6
Phantom Sundays Special Editions (Pioneer) #1-3
The Phantom (Pioneer 1989-90) #1-5
The Phantom Limited (Pioneer) #1 and #2
Phantom vs. Sky Maidens (Ken Pierce 1982)
Favorite Funnies (1936-1945)
Favorite Funnies (reprints 1973) #1-3
The Menomonee Falls

(continued on page 36)

Gazette (1971-1976)
The Singh Brotherhood (Comic Art Publ. 1979)

Pacific Comics reprints, all oversized (Prisoner Of The Himalaya 1976; The Game Of Alvar 1976; Diana, Aviatrix Lost 1976; The Sea Horse 1976; The Phantom's Lost Treasure 1976; Return Of The Sky Band 1977; The League Of Lost Men 1977; The Precious Cargo Of Colonel Winn 1977; Feature Book #20 1993; Feature Book #22 1993; and The Inexorables 1993.)

Defenders of the Earth (Star Comics 1987) #1-4
Classic Comics and Crosswords (1987)
DC (miniseries 1989) #1-4
DC (1989-1990) #1-13
The Phantom (Marvel miniseries 1995) #1-3
Phantom 2040 (Marvel 1995) #1-4
Comics Revue (current beginning with #27)
"Strips" monthly (current)
Wolf Comics (from England but widely imported to US)

Phantom Novels

Big Little Books and Better Little Books (Whitman 1936-1947) #1100, #1416, #1421, #1468, #1474, #1489
Son of the Phantom (Whitman hardcover, 1944-1946)
Phantom paperback novels (Avon 1972-1975) #1-15
The Phantom (adaptation of Paramount film Avon 1996)

Harvey Hits. Unlike the Ace or early King comics, these contained entire Phantom stories.

Until the Gold Key comics, however, all Phantom comics were simply reprints from newspaper strips, usually severely edited with missing and cut panels making the daily strips fit the format of a comic.

Bill Lignante, famed courtroom artist (who incidentally covered many famous trials including Sirhan B. Sirhan, Rodney King, Angela Davis and Charles Manson), took over the Sunday Phantom strip after McCoy's death in 1961. Although, his tenure on the strip lasted only about eight months, he illustrated many Falk stories for Western Publishing which were used in Gold Key and King comics. His work included layouts, inking, lettering and in some instances (like the Girl Phantom stories), writing the script as well.

The daily strips were handed to standout artist, Sy Barry, who did the layout and the finished inking. Barry began copying the McCoy style but soon imposed his powerful technique which utilized realism and dramatic shadows. When Barry took over both Sunday and daily strips, he began to employ assistants, often from the same team of friends who worked with him on Flash Gordon. Included in this group are famed biblical artist, Andre LeBlanc, Batman illustrator, Joe Giella, and commercial artist, George Olesen. Olesen did rough layouts for more than 30 years and continues to do so today. LeBlanc often tightened pencils and Giella usually helped ink backgrounds.

Barry's work appears in Pioneer reprints and many many European Phantom comics where he is enormously popular.

King's were the first US comics to generate new Phantom stories. Next came the long-running Charlton series which featured all-new Phantom adventures. Some of the earliest comics were illustrated by Batman, artist, Jim Aparo. A longer run was drawn by Pat Boyette. But when the popularity of the series faltered, other artists were brought in to achieve a more traditional look. Among them were uncredited Italian and American artists including Frank Bolle, Don Sherwood, *(continued on page 66)*

***The Son of the Phantom* (Whitman 1944-46) is based on the 1944 story by Lee Falk and Wilson McCoy (illustrations are incorrectly attributed to Ray Moore). *The Phantom* #7 (1950) is one of 559 rare issues produced in New Zealand. They were printed in a landscape instead of portrait format.**

20 Phantom Rarities

by Chris Smith & Ed Rhoades

How appropriate that something called Phantom collectibles are so hard to find! With the release of the Paramount film, the character has recently been more visible to the public, resulting in many new items for Phantom enthusiasts to gather. To longtime fans, however, the most desirable Phantom artifacts are those old rarities that we keep looking for in flea markets and antique shops; at paper, toy, and comic shows; on the Internet; in publications; and through grapevines and networks built by years of collecting.

Because the the Phantom has been in existence for over 60 years, some of these prizes can be very pricey and hard to find in Fine or Near Mint condition. In fact, you can spend many hours, long journeys, and phone calls looking for them and coming up empty-handed. But when you do come across one, the excitement which ensues makes it worth the wait.

And one nice thing is that some of the more affordable ones (like the witch doctor model) can be just as much fun as the "priceless gems" (like the Sirrocco). The following are just a few of the sought-after things on our personal favorites list. May you be blessed one day with the fortune of finding some of these in a relative's attic. For now, though, we hope you enjoy this look at 20 exciting Phantom rarities!

2

1. The Phantom Jungle Playset produced in 1976 by the Larami Corp., is housed in a 6"x10" blisterpack and contains a Phantom figure in greeting pose. It also comes with assorted animals, a palm tree, and African tribesman. Initially selling for $1.29, today it is valued from $75-$150.

7

2. The Transogram Phantom Board Game is contained in a beautifully illustrated 10"x20" box which encompasses four full color die-cut stand-up figures… plus 28 (count 'em 28!) skull ring cards, spinner, plastic skull ring, patch of modeling clay, and playing board with 12 scenes (each a jungle crisis). Originally selling for $1.39, it now commands up to $250.

3-4. The Flashy Flickers Magic Picture Gun produced in the 60's by Marx has always been a very popular item. It came complete with a plastic movie viewer and four cartoon character films, one of which was the Phantom. Two variations were produced. The American (3), a light fawn-colored box with film strip examples pictured on the bottom, and the English version (4), a brown box with no film strip examples. Both variations sell today for $125-$150 Mint in the box.

16

5. The Phantom And Voodoo Witch Doctor Model Kit was produced in 1965 by Revelle. A colorful 10" x 6" x 2" box houses a witch doctor and elaborately-detailed Phantom in a noble pose. Originally priced at $2, it now sells for $250-$300.

6. The elusive 1960's Phantom Ceramic Mug is very desirable to the true Phantom collector. With the good mark symbol on its handle and a capacity large enough to keep anyone's thirst satisfied, it's value can range from as much as $125-$250.

7. The Phantom Exhibit Card of 1949 is similar in size to a postcard. Sold in vending machines at the time for only a penny, today it has increased in value by 1000%.

8. Phantom "Penny" Cards were manufactured in the late 1930's and were the earliest of all Phantom trading cards. These 3"x3" B&W reproductions each depicted a different comic panel from the original Lee Falk/Ray Moore Phantom story from 1936. The reverse had an ink-stamped logo of "Amoco Gas". Today's values run anywhere from $75-$100 each.

9. "Penny Card" Promotional Poster. Only one known existing specimen, it was produced by "Calex" and "Criss Cross Card Machine." Five original penny cards were affixed to this pre-printed thin yellow card stock. (Heaven only knows what this one is worth!)

10-12. (Left to right) **Australian Gold plated Skull Ring,** with red painted luminous eyes, originally sold for a shilling in the 1950's and easily fetches $400-$600 (US) today. Another sought-after **Australian Phantom Ring** was produced in the 1960s and features an ornate white plastic skull. It fetches $75-$100. The earliest American ring is the **Post Toasties Phantom Ring.** This 1949-produced flat multi-colored thin metal ring was a corn flakes cereal giveaway. In today's collectible market, its value has soared to $75-$125.

9

6

13-15. (Left to right) **The Phantom Gumball Charm** was available in the mid 1950's and today is almost impossible to find

8

(Prices vary.) **The Phantom Death-Mark Charm** is equally elusive. The **1946 Phantom Pep Pin** was part of the famous Pep cereal pin set, and is something you may stumble across. It is most recognizable by the purple graphic of the Phantom. ($60-$90).

16. The rare King Comic Display Box was produced in 1967 and is 7" x 7" x 11" tall. This particular display item, which could be conveniently placed on any countertop, was the point-of-purchase display for a three-comic bagged variety comic pack. A graphic of the Phantom is on either side of this box, accompanied by Flash Gordon and Mandrake. Value $250-$350.

17. The Phantom "Uniform and Equipment for Captain Action" (1st Series, left) was produced in 1966 by the Ideal Company. It is one of numerous comics and hero character uniforms and equipment produced for the Captain Action doll, which sold separately. The Phantom boxed set measures 15" x 11" x2" and contains costume, mask, boots, rifle, two gun holsters with pistols, knife, and brass knuckles. Originally priced at $3, today a mint boxed example ranges from $500-$800.

18. The Phantom "Uniform and Equipment for Captain Action" (2nd Series) shown on the right only differs in that a Phantom image flicker ring came inside–with a "special offer" sticker on the box. Also priced originally at $3, today a mint example can conservatively run up to $1,100.

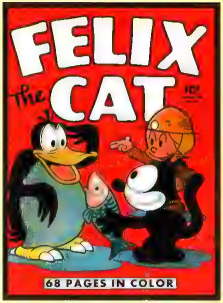
19. The Phantom Oil Paint-By-Numbers Set contains five elaborate sketched canvasses, in a 10"x10" box, each depicting Phantom action scenes. Equipped with brush and ten small paint pots, this set is one of the rarest of all Phantom collectibles. The original retail price was under $2... today is valued at $300.

20. The Phantom Sirrocco is a hand-painted, 5-1/2" tall figural premium, which was offered by the "Cream of Wheat Company" in 1944. It originally sold for under $2. It now ranges from $500-$1500. This gracefully-contoured figure is one of the most sought-after Phantom items!

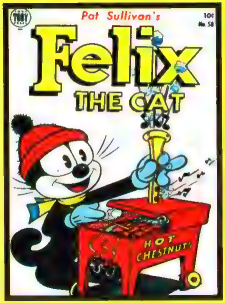
Since the Phantom is a character who has world-wide appeal, there are many rare items that have been produced throughout the years from all corners of the globe. The Phantom has a daily readership of over 60 million, and in the wake of the Paramount movie released this summer, many new fans of "the Ghost Who Walks" have been created.

There is also a big crossover market–with comic collectors, strip collectors, Big Little Book Collectors, pin and figurine collectors, model and game collectors, and original art collectors–all involved in the search for the books and the other products that feature the first and greatest costumed comic hero.

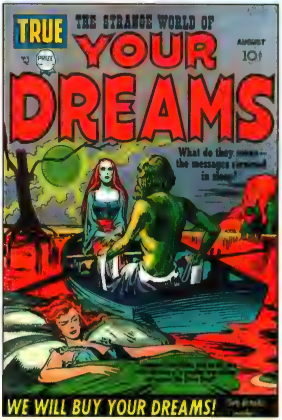
Happy collecting! ■



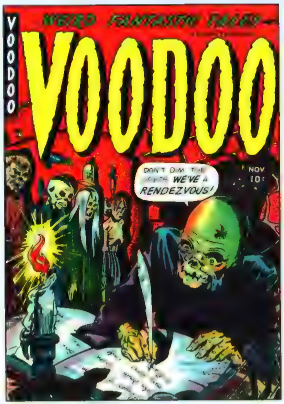
Above, the newly discovered and extremely rare Felix The Cat book #1 (see article on page 46). At right, the gorgeous two-page spread from the inside front cover and page 1 of the same book.



From left to right:
Four Color
#15 (1942),
#46 (Jun 1944),
#135 (Feb 1947),
#162 (Sep 1947);
Pat Sullivan's
Felix The Cat
#58 (Dec 1954),
#100 (Oct 1958).



Black Magic Vol. 7 #1 (Sep/Oct 1958); Adventures Into The Unknown #1 (Fall 1948); Forbidden Worlds #21 (Sep 1953); The Strange World Of Your Dreams Vol. 1 #1 (Aug 1952).



Voodoo Vol. 1 #4 (Nov 1952); Tales Of Horror #4 (Jan 1953); Dynamic Comics #16 (Oct 1945); Baffling Mysteries #25 (Jul 1955).

DC
The DARK MANSION of FORBIDDEN LOVE
A full-length novel of love and danger complete in this issue!
NO 2
REC
30525
38 pages
25¢
A nightmare begins for Ellen Drew after her marriage to David!
Who is the strange man holding her prisoner in a
HONEYMOON OF FEAR

DC
The DARK MANSION of FORBIDDEN LOVE
52 BIG pages
35¢
He came to her in the blackness of the night. Did he bring love or
THE KISS OF DEATH

Dark F

by Dave Grisez

It was mid-year, 1971 and National Periodical (DC) was hoping to pull more readers (especially female readers) into the fold. A quick review of the local newsstand revealed that the Gothic Romance novel was in full swing with no end in sight. This marketing info was reinforced by the success of the "Dark Shadows movement" and thus was born one of the most novel sub-genres… Gothic Romance comics!

Of course its parent genre, the love/romance comic, had been a staple since Joe Simon and Jack Kirby stunned a comic reading world with their well drawn and brilliantly written (and often copied) romance comics in the 1950s.

But the "fright factor" that was to be added was surely a twist unique to the times. DC was already publishing its renaissance of fright titles… the revamped *House Of Mystery* and *House Of Secrets*… but they only skimmed the surface of the brooding and moody stories that were eagerly purchased by a seemingly emotion starved and thrill-seeking public.

Dark Mansion #1 (September/October 1971) actually hit the stands in the summer as a bimonthly… a periodicity that allowed for better evaluation of sales for such an experimental book. The first issue's cover features a washtone orange, brown and yellow cover highlighting a haunting image of a cross-armed woman standing in the foreground. On her left is an image of a house possibly engulfed in flames… or perhaps it is something entirely different! Whatever the intent of the artist, the innovative and eye-catching style leapt out at readers like few others of the period. The subliminal ghost-like images were not quite "solid" and truly out of the ordinary. DC further hedged its bet by the mysterious title "The Secret of the Missing Bride" splashed all over the cover.

The interior artwork in #1 was done by Tony Dezuniga but lacks any author credit. The *thirty-seven page story* is well written and the story itself is full of intriguing characters, plot twists, romance, murder, and mystery.

It must have been difficult to sustain an encore for issue number two which hit the stands two months later. There was no overt attempt at promoting the artist or writer in this issue… in fact no credits are given for either "Honeymoon of Horror" (a predictable 26 page mish-mash of worn out plots) or "The Mystery of Dead Man's Cove" (an eleven page filler that reflects a Dick Giordano influence). But Adams collectors know that the cover of #2 is one of Neal's stand-out efforts.

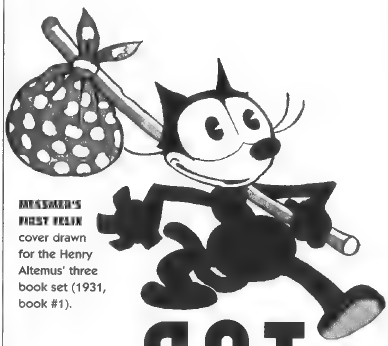
Issue #3 (January/February 1972) sports the fabulous cover talents of Jeff Jones. The cover reflects the now formula damsel-in-danger menaced by an unknown and sinister male background figure and an eerie mansion. Jones does manage to give it his own special treatment and the "grey-tone" process sets this cover apart from other contenders on a crowded newsstand. The second issue's 37 and 1/2 page book length story "Kiss of Death" is not a disappointment. In fact, this epic is a true gothic thriller with vampiric overtones… and it's even rendered by the great Don Heck to boot!

Dark Mansion Of Forbidden Love #4 (March/April 1972) saw a change in the cover format. Yes, the girl, the mansion, the menacing male figure… they were still there. But the emphasis in the logo was now placed on the words "Dark Mansion." Vince Colletta and Ernesto (Ernie) Chua handled the artistic responsibilities for "The Grey Lady of Coburn Manor." A curious footnote to this issue is highlighted by the apparent discrepancy between the cover title , "A Kiss from the Grave," and the final interior title "Grey Lady". Either a story was retitled or totally replaced.

Sadly, the book with the most imaginative title, found that it needed a name change with issue number five. The "new" title, *Forbidden Tales Of Dark Mansion*, sported a 20¢ cover price and dropped the novel-length format. Thus was closed a small chapter in comic book history. *Forbidden Tales* became more of a terror title while losing its gothic romance/horror roots and eventually was canceled after #15 (dated March, 1974).

Some collectors believe that the book never reached its demographically targeted audience and the comic reading public just wasn't buying. Others hypothesize that the title got going just as the gothic romance craze began to fade. But whatever reason, Dark Mansion is now a scarce find in today's Bronze Age back-issue market. Especially difficult to find in high grade, this intriguing and elusive four issue run is certainly worth pursuing. I've no doubt that once you behold those great covers, you too will fall under the spell of the *Dark Mansion Of Forbidden Love*. ■

David Grisez still thrills to the smell and look of old comics and continues his passionate pursuit of the romance and the monsters of Jack Kirby.



MESSMER'S FIRST FELIX cover drawn for the Henry Altemus' three book set (1931, book #1).

CAT O'FINE TALES

Seventy-seven years after his creation by animator Otto Messmer, the mischievous tabby keeps on walking—with good reason, as Felix had some of the most creative adventures in fiction.

Felix first appeared in 1919's Feline Follies and got a Sunday comic strip beginning on August 19, 1923. Messmer directed Follies and the cartoons that ensued; he handled the comic completely from 1924 on, but both appeared under the auspices of studio CEO Pat Sullivan. Sullivan took credit for Felix in all media, but truth be told, his work on the comic was on the same rare basis as every other version of the cat. He never wrote the strips, inked a few in the first year for appearances' sake, and only signed his name on what came later.

And what came later was great indeed. If Carl Barks, with his strikingly realistic approach to animal comics, was the Shakespeare of the form, then Messmer was its Rabelais: a master of warped, wild, and very tall tales! Felix himself was remarkably adaptable; always in search of cat chow, women, and song, he could turn his environment and even his tail into objects to help carry out his plans. Felix's adventures matched his own surreality. A list of just a few of these magical journeys include his blimp tour of Europe and later Wonderland, his trip to the stars of the Zodiac, and his treks into innumerable uncharted jungles. No one ever drew in a style remotely similar to Messmer, and few readers found any other character as likable as the mischievous, iconoclastic Felix.

Comic book readers first saw Messmer's talent when a 1927 McLoughlin album reprinted a golf-game tale from Sunday strips earlier in the year.

A fond remembrance of Otto Messmer's and

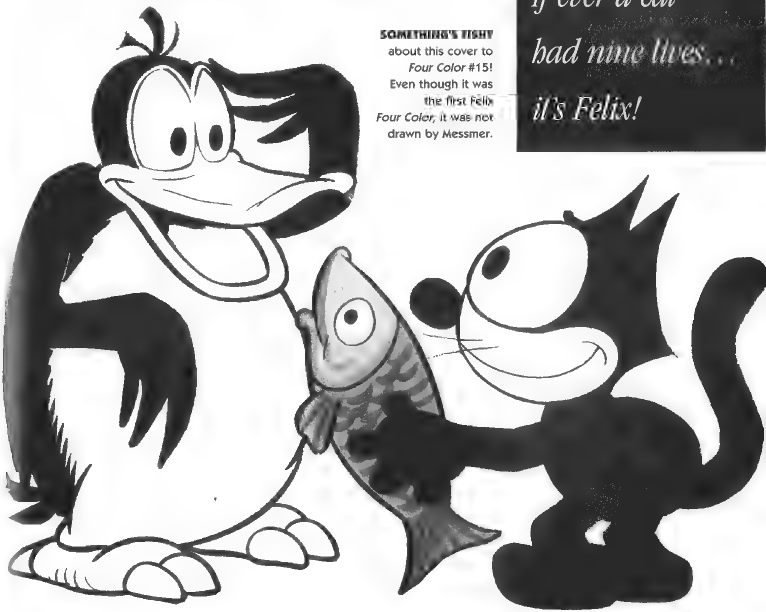
The book sports a bright, colorful cover (not by Messmer) showing Felix and his longtime rival, Skidoo the mouse. Then in 1931, Henry Altemus issued three reprints. These include two panels to a page in color and are rare indeed: *Overstreet* states that no copies of the first issue are known, although one has in fact been recently discovered (its cover is reproduced in this issue of *CBM* for the very first time).

Dell's Golden Age brought Felix even wider exposure. *New Funnies* #66 (1942) reprinted two 1941 Sundays ghosted by an unknown hand, but starting an issue later editors delivered 1930's dailies from Messmer's top period: "The Haunted Castle" in *New Funnies* #67-69, then "Felix the Cat on Cannibal Island" (*New Funnies* #70-78) and some shorter

By David Gerstein

If ever a cat had nine lives... it's Felix!

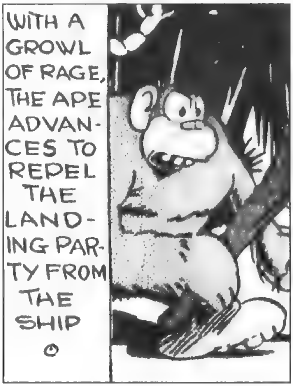
SOMETHING'S FISHY about this cover to *Four Color* #15! Even though it was the first Felix *Four Color*, it was not drawn by Messmer.



Joe Oriolo's history making feline... Felix!

FROM A HIGH TREE A HUGE APE GLARES WITH AWE AND RESENTMENT AT THE APPROACHING SCHOONER.
A SHIP!! AND IT LOOKS LIKE THE "SNOOPER". I'M SAVED
WITH THE INSTINCT OF SELF-PRESERVATION THE APE FLEES FROM THE MENACE IN THE HARBOR, DEEP INTO THE JUNGLE WITH HIS LITTLE ONES.
RATS
HIS FIRST THOUGHT IS FOR THE SAFETY OF HIS YOUNG. THE APE HIDES THEM IN A SECLUDED CAVE.

JUNGLE INTRIGUE is the theme of Messmer's classic "Expedition Mascot" (*Four Color* #15, 1943).



tales (ending in issue #84). The stories weren't complete as reprinted… the cannibal yarn started in the middle of the original newspaper story, and "The Haunted Castle" was even more heavily truncated (as it also was in *Four Color* #44 two years later) Even at 68 pages, the first all-Felix Dell comic (*Four Color* #15) had to eliminate strips and draw a new wrap-up scene for the story inside (1934's "Expedition Mascot").

ORIGINAL FELIX FOR COMICS!

Yet Messmer's stories were superb even when trimmed… and given that these are their only comic book printings,

they are really worth finding. In "Felix the Cat on Cannibal Island", Felix buys natives' trust with presents, but doesn't have enough for the king's enormous harem: "Your gifts may be singular," the monarch tells our hero, "but the queens are plural." "Expedition Mascot" boasts Messmer's most detailed art as Felix tames mutineer Tuffy Spinaker, then outwits apes and a hideous panther deep in the forest. Yet for all the threats to our hero, Messmer keeps tongue-in-cheek... the bouncy art lets humor lurk under the most dramatic moments.

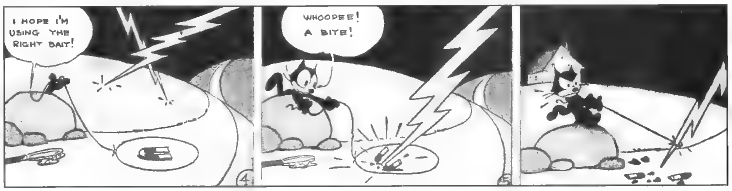
The length of Felix newspaper stories continued to trouble Dell. Their first solution was to drop continuities in favor of gags, as in mid-1940's Popular Comics, where bland mouse-chasing tales were used. Then in 1946 an improvement came. Dell's suppliers at Western Publishing hired Messmer and others to produce original Felix stories, first for *Four Color* and then for a regular Felix book. The first such story, "Felix Plants a Tree" (*Four Color* #119), traces Felix's family tree back to 4,000 B. C. "when man had nothing, and knew less." Messmer's portion of the issue's art is striking and he had launched a new, great phase of his artistic career.

But while the art remained superb, Messmer's writing became simpler as the issues first from Dell, then published by Toby Press--rolled on. Seeking only to please undemanding kids, the stories could be unrealistic even by funny-animal standards. For instance, in 1954's "A Fishy Official", Felix counts all the fish in the sea! Felix became less catlike... his mischief, loner attitude, and hunger were downplayed, and some resulting tales could have starred any hero.

This is not to call all the new stories weak. Several memorable stories involved adventures with a flying carpet, 1955's "The Studio Crasher" has Felix struggling manfully to become an actor, and an untitled

PENSIVE FELIX was drawn by Messmer in 1927. (Courtesy the Mark Newgarden collection)

CLASSIC MESSMER sequence from "Ohm Sweet Ohm" (May 6, 1928).



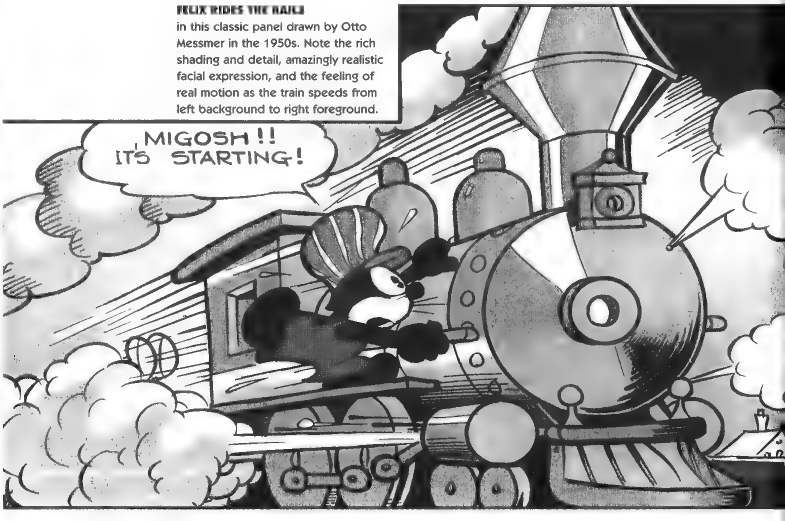
1953 tale (*Felix The Cat* #44) makes the cat a cog in a perpetual motion machine.

JOE ORIOLO MAKES THE SCENE

By the late 1950s, it was time for a change, and new talent came into its own. As early as 1946, animator Jim Tyer–renowned for a madcap style that joyfully shattered the rigor-mortis at low-budget animation shops–had drawn part of "Felix Plants a Tree", but it was the art of Joe Oriolo in that same issue that proved portentous. Oriolo soon authored his own Felix comics; when Harvey took over publishing Felix in 1955, he became the lead cartoonist.

Oriolo became so fond of Felix that he decided to acquire the character from its owners (Sullivan's heirs in Australia) and mount a larger revival. In 1958, he opened a studio and produced new Felix cartoons for TV. When kidvid regulations forced him to remove Felix's character flaws, he introduced supporting players–the Professor, Rock Bottom, Poindexter the genius–all who could make life more interesting for "Mr. Felix". Oriolo also created Felix's magic bag of tricks, a bottomless sack to aid Felix when he was in a jam. While Messmer's version of the character was gone, a

FELIX RIDES THE RAILS
in this classic panel drawn by Otto Messmer in the 1950s. Note the rich shading and detail, amazingly realistic facial expression, and the feeling of real motion as the train speeds from left background to right foreground.



'new universe' carried Felix into different types of stories and forward to the present. More recent comics got the best of both worlds. Not only did Oriolo's supporting characters appear, but without network restrictions, Felix could keep his old-style humor.

Today both Messmer and Oriolo Felixes deck comic-shop shelves. Dell and Toby comics are fairly easy to find. Fantagraphics and Hamilton have collected 1920s and 1950s Messmer work respectively, and while recent efforts to present Oriolo's Felix – both Harvey reprints and new stories by Oriolo's family–ended in 1994, there are sure to be new Felix comics in the future. Felix collectors have Golden Age classics to hunt, and a legacy that hasn't lived its last life yet. ■

RARE EXAMPLES of ornamentation from Educational Pictures' letterhead for Pat Sullivan's single- reel Felix the Cat cartoons.

David Gerstein, Disney comics writer for Gladstone and Europe's Egmont Publishing, recently edited Nine Lives to Live, a collection of 1920s Felix color comics now available from Fantagraphics Books. He doesn't like cats.

Feline-Asty

Red-Letter Days in Felix's Nine Lives

1919 November 9: "Feline Follies," Felix's screen debut, directed by Otto Messmer. Felix's girlfriend Kitty also appears in the film.

1923 August 19: American syndication date for the first Felix newspaper strip. (The initial strips appeared in Britain slightly earlier in a special promotion.)

1927 McLoughlin Bros. **Felix the Cat Book** – first Felix comic book.

1942 July: **New Funnies** 66 begins Dell reprint of Felix comic strips.

1943 Four Color 15 – first Golden Age all-Felix comic.

1946 September: **Four Color** 119 – First Felix art by Joe Oriolo, and first Messmer comics just for comic books.

1959 Joe Oriolo releases first Felix TV cartoons, creating The Professor, Rock Bottom, and Poindexter.

1991 June: **Felix—The Twisted Tale of the World's Most Famous Cat**, a book by John Canemaker, heightens interest in Felix's history. September: Reprints from Gladstone and Harvey begin revival of Felix comics.

1995 September: New series of Felix cartoons released to TV (first since 1961).

The Wraith of the West

Frank Frazetta's Ghost Rider Covers

BY PAT S. CALHOUN

Not only is the original Ghost Rider a character who combines features of the western, horror, and superhero genres, but even the inspirations for him range over a variety of sources. As Dick Ayers has related, the Ghost Rider concept first emerged under the influence of Vaughn Monroe's popular 1949 ballad, "Ghost Riders in the Sky". The song's lyrics tell of a band of spectral horsemen riding through the air chasing a herd of phantom cattle. As the idea developed, Vin Sullivan suggested that Dick could absorb some atmosphere by viewing Disney's then-current "Legend of Sleepy Hollow", the Washington Irving featurette that included a wonderfully spooky sequence with the Headless Horseman. And although Ayers deserves credit for designing the character and drawing the bulk of the Ghost Rider material–a steady feature in *Tim Holt* as well as his own mag–it must be admitted that the Ghost Rider covers done by Frank Frazetta exert a special magic.

Frazetta really came into his own at Magazine Enterprises (ME) as artist on the Dan Brand series published in *Durango Kid*–his first regular strip. And the culmination of his ME work was the monumental first issue of *Thun'da...King of the Congo*, conceived, partially written, and completely drawn- cover and stories–by Frank Frazetta. *Thun'da* #1 is truly one of the super-key pre-code books.

Ghost Rider #2 came out in late 1950, and the fantastic Frazetta cover is one of the great renderings of hero versus horror. Rex Fury raises a pistol over his head as Spectre charges in front of the shimmering mystery of "Death's Stagecoach". Against a simple blue background, Frazetta outlines Rex and Spectre with a heavy black line to contain the incandescence of their white figures, while the straining steeds of the stagecoach team and the hooded skull-faced driver are crimson–a contrast that comes across as extremely eerie.

Inside there's a "Death's Stagecoach" yarn drawn by Ayers. It's a typical Ghost Rider outing–where a murderer tries to portray his crimes as supernatural by disguising himself as a "grim reaper". He gives his victims notice by sending them skulls with their names on them. There's also a full-page ad for *Tim Holt* #21 with a Frazetta cover that splits diagonally to feature the title's two stars, with Tim as Red Mask in the upper right and the Ghost Rider in the lower left. Frank also did a Ghost Rider cover for *Tim Holt* #17 which pre-dated *Ghost Rider* #2 by several months and was Frazetta's first cover.

Frazetta's cover for *Ghost Rider* #4, from mid-1951, is pure phantasmagoria, with the Ghost Rider and Spectre seeming to fly up out of a glowing open grave. It's majestic and a little creepy. Spectre is rendered with the utmost animal dynamism, with his exaggerated mane blazing–you can almost hear an extraordinarily loud "whinny" as you stare at this one. And the three desperadoes–up to no good in the graveyard–are justifiably and colorfully aghast, confronted by these apparitions of vengeance.

There is an accompanying story, "The Greedy Ghosts of Boot Hill", about a couple of crooks who hide out in an abandoned mine shaft that runs below the town cemetery. The story can hardly match the supernal brilliance of the cover, but there is a nice moment when Rex's Chinese friend Sing-Song discovers a key clue while doing the bad guys' laundry. Also inside is a full-page ad featuring Frazetta's Red Mask cover for *Tim Holt* #23, his third and final cover for that title.

Frazetta's cover for *Ghost Rider* #5 showcases a scene from "The Tyrant of Brimstone" where the Ghost Rider rescues a spurned "showgirl" who was ready to testify against her former employer and lover until his gang abducted her from jail. They have taken her back to his casino to torture her *continued on page 54*

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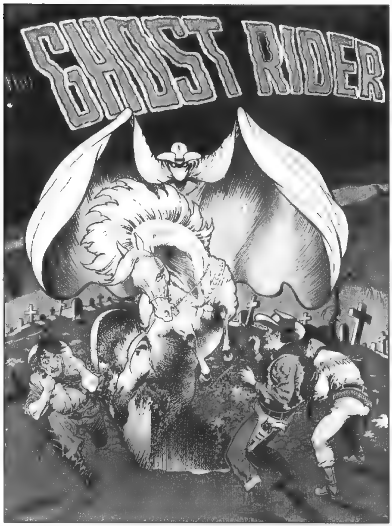
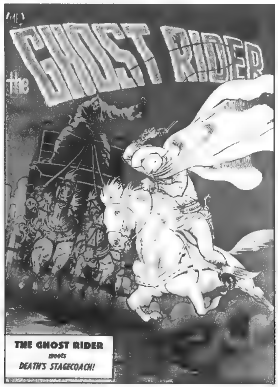
when the Ghost Rider comes crashing in, grabs her, and lassos the chandelier to swing free from their clutches. The blonde is rendered with abundant lushness, the grimacing gunman–who fires too late–crouches behind an expressive cloud of smoke, and the Ghost Rider cuts a suitably heroic figure as he hurtles through the air. Frazetta always made the most of the Ghost Rider's shrouded featureless face, making it add an inscrutable element to the character's otherworldly persona. And again, a simple background of red and black nicely accentuates the foreground figures. The story inside is pretty good- with the "tyrant" of crime brought down by his philandering and the strong will of his ex-mistress, the charming (even though she's a brunette in the story) Dolly Dawn.

Frazetta went on to do the fabulous run of Buck Rogers covers for *Famous Funnies* #209-#216 in 1953-1954 (preceded by his covers on *Buster Crabbe* #4 and #5–the #5 is a gorgeous Flash Gordon cover) and a cover, a story, and several collaborations for EC. Unfortunately his going to work for Al Capp and Li'l Abner cut down on the amount of comic book work he might have done.

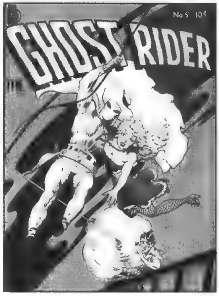
But his Ghost Rider covers–great work on a great character that blended such a wide range of pop culture and four-color interests–stand at the zenith of the form from the era when comics were popular enough to appeal to the majority of adults as well as almost every child in the country. And of all the artists to emerge from that cornucopia of early-1950s comics, none can match Frank Frazetta's combination of superb linework, exquisite anatomy, intense imagination, and the ability to capture a scene at its most dramatic moment. ■



***Ghost Rider* #2 (1950) - Only Frank Frazetta could render the forces of darkness in such a grimly beautiful fashion–as the Ghost Rider challenges "Death's Stagecoach".**



***Ghost Rider* #4 (1951) Over-the-top superhero imagery at its finest combines with fire and brimstone on this classic Frazetta cover illustrating "The Greedy Ghosts of Boot Hill".**



***Ghost Rider* #5 (1951) Frazetta elegantly stages the Ghost Rider's arrival- snatching Dolly Dawn from the gangsters about to torture her for threatening to testify against them.**

SHOWCASE NEW ENGLAND

GOLDEN AGE KEYS

ACTION	#1	F (MR)	$60000
ADVENTURE	#40	F+	$22000
ADVENTURE	#48	F/F+	$11000
ALL AMERICAN	#16	VF (LR)	$25000
ALL FLASH	#1	F-	$3000
ALL STAR	#3	G/VG	$3500
ALL STAR	#3	F/VF	$25000
ALL STAR	#8	VF-	$22000
BATMAN	#1	F (MR)	$8500
BIG ALL AMERICAN	#1	VG/F	$2700
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#1	VF+	$18000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#1	F+ (ER)	$8500
DARING MYSTERY COMICS	#1	F/VF	$10000
DETECTIVE	#27	F+ (MR)	$50000
DETECTIVE	#38	F/VF	$12500
FLASH	#1	F/VF (LR)	$17000
GREEN LANTERN	#1	VF+ (MR)	$4800
HUMAN TORCH	#1	F/VF	$11500
HUMAN TORCH	#1	VF+ (MR)	4500
MARVEL COMICS	#1	VG/F	$40000
MORE FUN	#52	F/VF (MR)	$18000
MORE FUN	#55	VG/F	$5500
MYSTIC	#1	VF+ (Nova Scotia)	$9000
NEW YORK WORLDS FAIR 1939		VG+	$5500
NEWYORK WORLDS FAIR 1940		F+	$5000
SENSATION COMICS	#1	NM	$35000
SILVER STREAK	#1	VF/NM (Pay Copy)	$17000
SUBMARINER	#1	VG	$4000
SUBMARINER	#1	VF+ (LR)	$4500
SUPERBOY	#1	VF	$4200
SUPERMAN	#1	VG/F (MR)	$10000
TOUGH KID SQUAD	#1	VF+	$7000
WORLDS BEST	#1	F+	$5500
WONDER WOMAN	#1	F/F+	$5000

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(2) Money Orders get next day turn around;

(3) Checks must clear before shipping if we don't know you;

(4) Grading by Overstreet Standards;

(5) Restored books are described by their apparent grade;

(6) 14 day right-of-return

(7) All orders shipped UPS overnight service at no charge.

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Guarantee:
Unconditional 14 day return - and we absorb all return costs!

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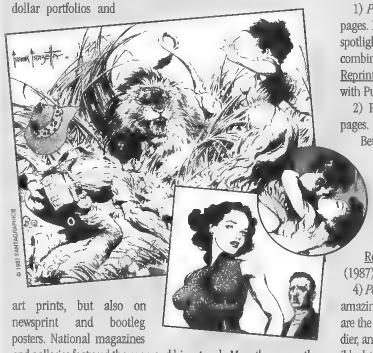
Frazetta's Femme Fatales!

Reprints of Frank Frazetta's classic stories can be had for a song!

Second Time Around is a CBM feature that spotlights great bargains in comic book reprints! —By Shawn Hamilton

TWENTY-THREE YEARS AGO, WHEN I FIRST BECAME A SERIOUS comic collector (I was nine years old), one name rose above all others. One man was uniformly respected, admired and collected in every corner of comics fandom. Entire fanzines were devoted to his work, his drawings and paintings were produced not only in high dollar portfolios and



art prints, but also on newsprint and bootleg posters. National magazines and galleries featured the man and his artwork. More than any other, he has influenced comic artists for the last 40 years. If you are reading this magazine then I don't have to tell you that this man is Frank Frazetta!

"Frazetta" was the original one-name personality, impacting the public outside of comics more than any other comic artist. From bikers with tattoos of Frazetta's Death Dealer to movie companies paying tens of thousands of dollars for an original Frazetta painting for their movie poster. He will most assuredly go down in history as one of the 20th century's finest artists!

When I had to decide which series of story reprints to spotlight in this column, I thought at first it would be extremely difficult. Should I cover the westerns with Frank's depiction of desperate outlaws and graceful steeds? No! His science fiction work evoking images of alien worlds and the brave men who explored them? No! It would have to be Frank's romance stories, for Frazetta does one thing in particular better than anyone else... The Female Form!!

Between November, 1953 and April, 1955, Frank Frazetta did five stories for Eastern Publishing's Personal Love, that I feel are the best that the genre has ever seen.

The following is a list of those stories with a brief description of some of the stories' highlights as well as where those stories have been reprinted.

1) *Personal Love* #24 (November 1953) "A Love of my Own", 8 pages. Love in the military, with the alluring Lt. Lila Kent. This story spotlights Lt. Kent in uniform with Frazetta's classic male lead. The combination makes this story a beauty!

Reprinted: *Buried Treasure* #3 by Caliber Publishing in association with Pure Imagination Publishing (1990).

2) Personal Love #25 (January 1954) "Too Late For Love", 7 pages. The story of a conceited secretary (a tribute to glamour girl Bettie Page) after her engaged boss. Swimsuits, formal gowns, and two gorgeous women in one gorgeous story.

Reprinted: *Untamed Love* #1 by Fantagraphics Publishing (1987).

3) *Personal Love* #27 (March 1954) "The Wrong Road", 8 pages. The transformation of an innocent girl from a fishing town into a big city glamour girl. Wow!

Reprinted: *Untamed Love* #1 by Fantagraphics Publishing (1987).

4) *Personal Love* #28 (May 1954) "Empty Heart", 6 pages. The most amazing thing about this particular story besides the female character are the sculptures that Frazetta uses in the backgrounds. A Roman soldier, an attacking tiger, and an exotic dancer are all captured in incredible detail, simply as decoration for the story. Simply amazing!

Reprinted: *Untamed Love* #1 by Fantagraphics Publishing (1987).

5) *Personal Love* #32 (April 1955) "Untamed Love", 8 pages. The undisputed classic!! This story has everything, an exotic female lead, a jungle setting and the most astounding renderings of jungle cats ever done in comics!

Reprinted: *Untamed Love* #1 by Fantagraphics Publishing (1987).

The current Overstreet value for these five stories in Near Mint is over $1,000! However, as you can see from the index, all five stories are reprinted in only two comics. *Buried Treasure* #3 and *Untamed Love* #1. The total cost of the reprints is $4.50!

Enthusiasm for Frank Frazetta's work by fandom is just as ageless as the artwork from these five stories. So, go out and find them. You won't be disappointed. Health and happiness to you all and until next time "Keep searching those sale boxes!" ■

GOLDEN AGE DC

ACTION COMICS	#3	VG+	$6500
ACTION COMICS	#5	F+ (LR)	$3200
ACTION COMICS	#17	VG+	$1000
ACTION COMICS	#19	F+	$2500
ACTION COMICS	#19	F/F+	$2000
ACTION COMICS	#20	F/VF (MR)	$1500
ACTION COMICS	#23	VG-	$1500
ACTION COMICS	#30	VF+ (TS)	$900
ADVENTURE COMICS	#33	VF-	$1400
ADVENTURE COMICS	#41	G/VG	$900
ADVENTURE COMICS	#44	VG (TS, CT)	$900
ADVENTURE COMICS	#45	F++	$1700
ADVENTURE COMICS	#46	G/G+	$500
ADVENTURE COMICS	#48	F/VF (MR, KE)	$4500
ADVENTURE COMICS	#49	F++	$1300
ADVENTURE COMICS	#51	VF-	$2300
ADVENTURE COMICS	#53	VF+	$2000
ADVENTURE COMICS	#53	VF- (TS)	$800
ADVENTURE COMICS	#54	VG (TP)	$400
ADVENTURE COMICS	#55	F/F+	$750
ADVENTURE COMICS	#56	F/VF	$1000
ADVENTURE COMICS	#56	VG+	$400
ADVENTURE COMICS	#57	VG+	$400
ADVENTURE COMICS	#57	VF++	$1800
ADVENTURE COMICS	#58	F-	$500
ADVENTURE COMICS	#60	F/F+	$1000
ADVENTURE COMICS	#60	VG (TS)	$475
ADVENTURE COMICS	#61	G/VG	$2200
ADVENTURE COMICS	#63	VG/F	$400
ADVENTURE COMICS	#64	F/F+	$750
ADVENTURE COMICS	#70	VF-	$1000
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#21	VG/F	$1000
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#24	VG	$500
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#26	FR/G	$225
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#40	F/VF	$600
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#49	F/VF	$450
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#49	VF	$550
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#53	VF/NM (CP)	$350
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#55	VF	$450
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#61	VG/F	$1000
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#62	VF+	$550
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#63	VF+ (D-Copy)	$550
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#65	VF/NM	$600
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#66	VF+ (D-Copy)	$550
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#68	VF	$400
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#71	VF+	$400
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#72	F/VF	$300
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#73	VF+	$400
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#73	VG	$90
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#75	VF	$350
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#76	VF/NM	$500
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#80	VF/NM	$500
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#81	VF+	$400
ALL AMERICAN COMICS	#87	VF	$350
ALL FLASH QUARTERLY	#3	VF/NM	$1800
ALL STAR COMICS	#4	VG/VG+	$1000
ALL STAR COMICS	#5	F+ (LR)	$1400
ALL STAR COMICS	#5	VG/F	$1000
ALL STAR COMICS	#6	G	$300
ALL STAR COMICS	#6	VG-	$400
ALL STAR COMICS	#7	VG-	$575
ALL STAR COMICS	#11	NM	$3500
ALL STAR COMICS	#11	VG+	$550
ALL STAR COMICS	#12	F+	$1100
ALL STAR COMICS	#13	F+	$1000
ALL STAR COMICS	#16	F/F+	$625
ALL STAR COMICS	#18	VF- 88 (D-Copy)	$2100
ALL STAR COMICS	#20	VG	$285
ALL STAR COMICS	#23	VG/VG+	$325
ALL STAR COMICS	#24	VG+ 50	$375
ALL STAR COMICS	#26	F/F+	$500
ALL STAR COMICS	#26	NM	$2000
ALL STAR COMICS	#29	VF+ 89	$1200
ALL STAR COMICS	#30	VF 82	$1000
ALL STAR COMICS	#30	VG+	$265
ALL STAR COMICS	#31	F-	$325
ALL STAR COMICS	#31	VG 48	$245
ALL STAR COMICS	#32	VF 78	$600
ALL STAR COMICS	#33	VF 82	$3000
ALL STAR COMICS	#35	FN 68	$360
ALL STAR COMICS	#38	F++	$750

(continued on next ad page)

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Post Gold & Pre Silver is Red Hot!

No longer worth quite as much as gold, they did give their 1940's brethren a run for their money a few years ago. But of late, Silver Age comics have a shiny new luster. I've mentioned this marketplace fact a few times in the past two months, and a rejuvenated collector interest is still growing! Silver Age is clearly gaining even greater momentum.

As for Golden Age, I've been hearing quite a few different reports from various factions around the hobby. It seems like only yesterday that most Golden Age material was bringing multiples of the 1994 guide in all grades. But Gold (the "good stuff") is still bringing in over guide prices. In fact in some cases, it's bringing really outstanding prices for certain titles and issues.

Platinum Age (pre 1933)

What will it take for this market to gain a foothold in the collector's conscience? Its difficult to say, but I really believe it will have to be a in-depth guide and photo journal of the available books to make it comfortable for collectors to step up and pay good money for this untapped market.

Sales: Yellow Kid #2 FR $150; Pink Laffin, He Tells 'Em GD $50; Moon Mulligans #5 FN $180.

Pre Golden Age/Golden Age (1933-45)

While many collectors entered the Gold market to collect/invest in Timelys and DC, many are now pushed out by the higher and higher prices. A few leave, but many bitten by the bug, are now looking around at the "undiscovered books". Once again, a collector can purchase certain key books in grade (FN or better) for around $500 or lower, and have fun - always with the upside potential.

Sales: Dynamic #1 VG/FN $525; Captain America #23 GD $180; All Select #2 VF-/VF $900; Marvel Mystery #21 $1,500; Great Comics #3 FN $495; Comic Cavalcade #1 GD $750; Green Lantern #3 VF $3,450; National Comics #7 FN $750; Skyman #1 FN $485; Top Notch #8 App VF $500; Four Color #1 (Dick Tracy) GD $1,100; Blue Ribbon Comics #1 FN $1,250; Flash #4 FN+ $1,600.

Post Golden Age/Pre Silver Age (1946-56)

This is the area that has been having the most action as of late and is red hot! Many collectors are curious as to what is exactly available in this Age, and are looking for pre-code horror, Good Girl, M. Baker, and anything that is out of the norm - which is pretty much the entire genre. Most prices are multiples of guide since the guide is viewed as being very low for these at this time! Collectors are having fun finding bargains... and dealers are looking more and more for this material since it is now worth spending time and efforts on.

Sales: Flyboy #1 VF $160; Seven Seas #3 FN $190; Human Torch #37 FN $275; Modern Love #73 VF $285; My Secret Affair #1 FN $110; Our Army At War #29 NM $300; Marvel Boy #1 FN $295; Green Hornet Comics #36 VF $220; Target Comics #V10 #3 VF $180; The Witness #1 FN+ $450; Sweet Love #5 VF/NM $110; Strange Worlds #4 FN $225; Strange Adventures #6 VF $155.

Silver Age (1956-69)

Plenty of it out there? That is what we've been told over the past few years, but when one begins to hunt for the book in question - why are they? Sure we can find a the top keys in just about any grade, but where are those obscure Brave & Bold, Journey Into Mystery, Mystery In Space, or Strange Adventures issues? Pre-hero DC, DC Sci Fi, and Marvel books are leading the resurgence, but are more difficult to find than most were lead to believe... especially in high grade!

Continued on page 60

GREG WHITE • COMICS & COLLECTIBLES

Kissimmee, Florida

Hello from sunny and warm central Florida. We have wrapped up our summer and the word is average. Business wasn't great but it was not poor either. We had a good summer of back issue sales but there is certainly room for improvement. Our mail order ads were flat unless the prices were well below guide. Even a few key books received little notice. Perhaps everyone was on vacation. We hope for a strong autumn.

Golden Age (1935-55)

Not much activity this month. We purchased small runs of Superman (mid 40's) and a nice group of Timelys. Sales on non key books are not happening unless the prices are 20% - 30% below guide. Even then I have had trouble moving such titles as Military, Modern, Airboy, Star Spangled, Police, Capt. Marvel etc.

Main line DCs and Timelys sell a little better. We need to get the pricing in line with reality. Many of the older books just will not bring Guide prices. This includes exposure at my store, mail order, and conventions. Prices should be lowered to reflect this.

Recent Sales: Batman #3 GD $700; Clue #1 GD $95; Star Spangled #8 VG $250.

Silver Age (1956-69)

We were finally able to restock on Marvels from 1962-65. We purchased a large collection that featured deep runs of all but a few titles. We even got a high grade (FN-VF) Sgt. Fury #1 - first nice copy I have had in many years. Funny how I see so many Amazing Spider-Man #1s and X-Men #1s but so few Sgt. Fury #1s.

Continued on page 60

SHOWCASE NEW ENGLAND

GOLDEN AGE DC (continued)

ALL STAR COMICS	#43	VF/VF+	$1000
ALL STAR COMICS	#57	VG/F	$600
BATMAN	#2	F+ (LR)	$2400
BATMAN	#3	F/F+	$2700
BATMAN	#5	F/VF	$2800
BATMAN	#5	G/G+	$600
BATMAN	#6	G	$375
BATMAN	#6	VF-	$2800
BATMAN	#7	G	$375
BATMAN	#7	VF+ (CP)	$2200
BATMAN	#7	VG-	$1000
BATMAN	#8	FR/G	$275
BATMAN	#10	F++ (TW)	$1300
BATMAN	#12	G	$240
BATMAN	#12	VG	$375
BATMAN	#13	F- (NOC)	$625
BATMAN	#13	FR/G	$200
BATMAN	#13	VF+	$2800
BATMAN	#14	G (TS)	$255
BATMAN	#14	VF (LR)	$900
BATMAN	#15	VG	$470
BATMAN	$16	G	$400
BATMAN	#17	FR/G	$125
BATMAN	#17	VG	$300
BATMAN	#18	G+	$250
BATMAN	$23	VF/NM	$2500
BATMAN	#24	VF/NM	$1400
BATMAN	#24	VG+	$300
BATMAN	#25	VF/NM	$2700
BATMAN	#25	VG/F	$450
BATMAN	#29	VF/NM	$1400
BATMAN	#30	G	$120
BATMAN	#30	VG	$235
BATMAN	#31	G+	$135
BATMAN	#31	VF	$600
BATMAN	#32	G+	$130
BATMAN	#33	VG/F	$285
BATMAN	#34	G	$90
BATMAN	#35	VG 82	$700
DETECTIVE COMICS	#29	VG/FN (CP, TS)	$9000
DETECTIVE COMICS	#30	VG/F (MR, W)	$1800
DETECTIVE COMICS	#32	VG-	$2000
DETECTIVE COMICS	#33	F/VF (TW, TS)	$13000
DETECTIVE COMICS	#33	FR/GD	$3500
DETECTIVE COMICS	#34	F+ (MR, W)	$1800
DETECTIVE COMICS	#35	VG/F	$3500
DETECTIVE COMICS	#35	VG/F	$3500
DETECTIVE COMICS	#36	VG/F (ER)	$1200
DETECTIVE COMICS	#38	F+ (MR)	$6500
DETECTIVE COMICS	#38	F/VF (TW)	$12500
DETECTIVE COMICS	#40	G	$600
DETECTIVE COMICS	#42	F+ (TW)	$1000
DETECTIVE COMICS	#42	G-	$175
DETECTIVE COMICS	#43	VG	$340
DETECTIVE COMICS	#44	G+	$200
DETECTIVE COMICS	#44	VF (TW)	$1800
DETECTIVE COMICS	#45	G/VG	$350
DETECTIVE COMICS	#45	VG/F	$775
DETECTIVE COMICS	#46	VF (TW)	$1500
DETECTIVE COMICS	#46	VG+	$450
DETECTIVE COMICS	#47	FR/G	$150
DETECTIVE COMICS	#48	F+	$950
DETECTIVE COMICS	#49	VG/VG+	$350
DETECTIVE COMICS	#55	FR/G	$100
DETECTIVE COMICS	#55	VG+	$290
DETECTIVE COMICS	#57	VG+	$285
DETECTIVE COMICS	#58	G	$450
DETECTIVE COMICS	#66	F++	$1800
DETECTIVE COMICS	#66	FR/G	$250
DETECTIVE COMICS	#76	F/F+	$550
DETECTIVE COMICS	#77	VG+	$220
DETECTIVE COMICS	#77	VG/VG+	$225
DETECTIVE COMICS	#83	G	$80
DETECTIVE COMICS	#86	G+	$95
DETECTIVE COMICS	#89	VF	$625
DETECTIVE COMICS	#92	VF+	$900
DETECTIVE COMICS	#93	VG	$130
DETECTIVE COMICS	#94	VG/F (CT)	$135
DETECTIVE COMICS	#95	VG+	$180
DETECTIVE COMICS	#96	VF+	$700
DETECTIVE COMICS	#99	VG+	$300
DETECTIVE COMICS	#100	VG/VG+	$250
DETECTIVE COMICS	#103	F+	$265
DETECTIVE COMICS	#103	NM (TW)	$1200

(continued on next ad page)

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MARKET REPORTS

Continued from page 58

Demand for many of these books has been good. We sold a group of the Fantastic Four and Journey Into Mystery right away. Others are moving out piece by piece. We also had some activity this month with copies of JLA and Flash selling. The non Marvel & DC books from this period are slow here. We have a fine stock of Charlton, Gold Key, Dell, Archie, and Harvey from this period that just don't move with any regularity. It is disturbing. Once again I feel the Price guides are not accurate on many of these books are prices should be lowered to more realistic levels. Try to get $100 for a high grade (VF-NM) Annette photo cover or $150 for a similar Ricky Nelson cover. It is just not happening with any regularity. Guide prices should not be set on one or two isolated sales. It must reflect the overall retail performance!

Recent Sales Spider-Man #2 VG $350, Fantastic Four #17 VF $250, Journey into Mystery #84 FN $500, Flash #123 FN $275, JLA #3 FN $195

Original Art & Toys

Quiet this month. We purchased three Winnie the Pooh production cels that should do well for us. Not much else came our way. Sales included two Frazetta comic book pages and one Frazetta Sunday page. We also sold a couple Disney animation drawings. I wish more comic book art pre 1970 would pop in. I have a market for these items if I could find them. We did not purchase any vintage toys this month. Collections of toys seem to go in spurts. We did set up at a local two day toy show recently that was really disappointing! I feel the promoter sold too many tables, did not bring in any guests, and did not spend enough on promotion. Attendance was poor and even with a formidable stock we did not do table money. Discouraging!

We did sell the following at the store: Capt. Action doll, loose $95, Black Beauty Corgi, loose $75, King Kong Aurora in the box $450.

That will wrap our month. If you are visiting the Walt Disney World area please stop by and say hello! See you in thirty.

THE MATT SCHIFFMAN REPORT

Continued from page 58

Sales: Strange Adventures #100 VF $110, #117 VF $400; X-Men #1 GD $580; Tales Of Suspense #9 FN $185; Rip Hunter #1 VG $145; The Phantom #1 FN $75; Nick Fury #1 VF/NM $65; Amazing Spider-Man #2 FR $140, #15 VF/NM $650; Batman #155 FN/VF $210; Strange Suspense Stories #75 NM $140; World's Finest #77 VF/NM $250; Hulk #1 GD $2,100; Submariner #8 NM $45.

Post Golden Age or Bronze Age (1970-79)

No one wanted them much back then... and few seem to collect them during the past twenty five years! But now... look out! Just as the Silver Age is finding a renewed interest in pre-hero DC and Marvel horror books, the reprints of those issues are finding a new following. The majority of these books ended up in the bargain bins, and thus are now in such poor shape. That means finding them is decent condition (and especially in high grade) is rather difficult. Therein lies the fun. Journey Into Mystery, Monsters On The Prowl, House Of Secrets, House Of Mystery and those great Kirby monster reprints are all the "rage".

Sales: World's Finest #215 NM $32; Lois Lane #105 NM $15; Journey Into Mystery #1 NM $8; Hulk #181 VF+ $295; X-Men GS #1 VF/NM $480; Daredevil #81 NM $30; Marvel Spotlight #2 FN+ $38; Weird War #1 GD $18; Brave & Bold #100 NM $35; Werewolf By Night #32 NM $88; Sgt. Rock #302 VF/NM $30; Batman Family #1 NM $7; Swamp Thing #7 VF/NM $24; Adventure #431 NM $18; Trigger Twins #1 NM $6; Where Creatures Roam #1 VF/NM $18; Where Monsters Dwell #1 VF/NM $18.

When trends are in flux, such as they are now, it is always a great time for buyers! Savvy collectors can really take advantage of the present market "chaos" and lack of focus. Bargains can be found everywhere as dealers look to reduce inventories, especially books they may have paid high for and are now looking to sell. Also some collectors may have "over specialized" in one genre and now look to free up cash to expand their interests. Demand is the sometimes fickle engine that drives this market.

As a friendly reminder though, from one collector to another. We all know to "buy what you like" but I usually add "buy smart as well!" Great books in nice shape are usually a safe bet. There is plenty of "market clutter" out there... sometimes confusing and sometimes enticing. Fleeting trends are, by definition, temporary! Buying what you enjoy is a great hedge against getting caught up in the latest fad title or fad company, especially if they are expensive!

Good luck and happy collecting! ■

GREG PHARIS & DAVE GRISEZ

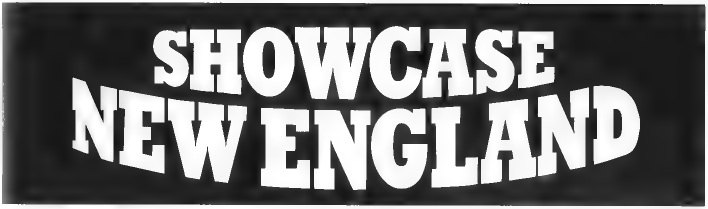
SAN DIEGO COMICS & COLLECTIBLES
San Diego, California

More and More I've noticed that hobbyists seem to be setting aside the enjoyment part of the hobby and, instead, rooting through a price guide to find what's booking at the highest prices. Well, I think I have a solution for this problem. The Comic Book Marketplace should be required reading for everybody in the hobby, no matter what level you're at. Even when one is making a living in comics, it is still a hobby first and foremost... and CBM supports that idea.

It's my premise that the more we know about something, the more affinity we will have for it. Soooo, if people are reading CBM, they are going to be exposed to many great books and artists. This gets them excited about searching out these wonderful gems, and (hopefully) less concerned about condition. End of soapbox, now for a few recent sales:

Superman #50 VG+ $150; Consignments: Canteen Kate #3 GD $30 ; Rangers #43 VG+ $30, All Top #13 VG $175.

There's been a surge of interest in 80 page Giants, Supe titles and high grade Lois Lane's (good luck on finding those!!) Come on in and see us when you're in the Southwesterly corner of the US!! ■



GOLDEN AGE DC (continued)

DETECTIVE COMICS	107	G/VG	$100
DETECTIVE COMICS	118	VF	$575
DETECTIVE COMICS	122	VF (LR)	$350
DETECTIVE COMICS	122	VG+	$300
DETECTIVE COMICS	#123	VG+	$150
DETECTIVE COMICS	#127	VG+	$160
DETECTIVE COMICS	#134	F/VF	$325
DETECTIVE COMICS	#160	VF+	$700
DETECTIVE COMICS	#161	VF/NM (TW)	$900
DETECTIVE COMICS	#161	VG/F	$135
DETECTIVE COMICS	#166	VG/VG+	$135
DETECTIVE COMICS	#168	F+	$1800
DETECTIVE COMICS	#171	VF+	$1000
FLASH COMICS	#11	F	$475
FLASH COMICS	#12	G/VG	$250
FLASH COMICS	#14	VG	$325
FLASH COMICS	#15	VF 78	$900
FLASH COMICS	#20	VG	$245
FLASH COMICS	#21	F/F+	$475
FLASH COMICS	#22	F	$425
FLASH COMICS	#24	VF 75	$650
FLASH COMICS	#27	VG+ (TP)	$225
FLASH COMICS	#29	VG/VG+	$235
FLASH COMICS	#36	F	$255
FLASH COMICS	#41	G	$75
FLASH COMICS	#41	VG+	$175
FLASH COMICS	#42	G	$75
FLASH COMICS	#44	F	$225
FLASH COMICS	#56	VF/NM (LR)	$800
FLASH COMICS	#58	VG/VG+	$135
FLASH COMICS	#59	VG	$120
FLASH COMICS	#60	F-	$165
FLASH COMICS	#66	VG	$120
FLASH COMICS	#66	VG+	$150
FLASH COMICS	#68	VG	$120
FLASH COMICS	#72	VF+ 87	$650
FLASH COMICS	#82	VG+	$150
FLASH COMICS	#92	VG/VG+	$600
FLASH COMICS	#95	G/VG (POBC)	$200
FLASH COMICS	#100	VG-	$400
FLASH COMICS	#104	F+	$3500
GREEN LANTERN	#5	VF+ 87	$1700
MORE FUN	#14	VG-	$3300
MORE FUN	#16	F/F+	$3500
MORE FUN	#20	VF+ (LR)	$1500
MORE FUN	#21	VF+ (CP)	$2200
MORE FUN	#25	G+	$450
MORE FUN	#25	VG	$600
MORE FUN	#32	VG	$475
MORE FUN	#33	VG	$475
MORE FUN	#33	VG/F	$650
MORE FUN	#34	G-	$225
MORE FUN	#36	G/VG	$375
MORE FUN	#36	VF+ (CR)	$1300
MORE FUN	#36	VG	$475
MORE FUN	#37	G/G+	$350
MORE FUN	#37	VG	$475
MORE FUN	#38	G	$250
MORE FUN	#40	VG+	$625
MORE FUN	#46	VF	$1400
MORE FUN	#46	VG+	$475
MORE FUN	#47	VF/VF+	$1800
MORE FUN	#47	VG-	$350
MORE FUN	#48	G/VG	$315
MORE FUN	#50	F-	$700
MORE FUN	#50	NM- 9NS)	$2000
MORE FUN	#56	VG-	$900
MORE FUN	#59	VG (TP)	$600
MORE FUN	#62	F+ (MR, KE)	$1000\
MORE FUN	#62	G/VG	$425
MORE FUN	#63	VG	$550
MORE FUN	#63	VF++	$2800
MORE FUN	#64	VF+	$2800
MORE FUN	#64	F+	$1350
MORE FUN	#66	VF	$2000
MORE FUN	#67	VF	$5000
MORE FUN	#68	VF	$1500
MORE FUN	#70	VF+	$2000
MORE FUN	#70	VF/VF+	$1500
MORE FUN	#70	VG/VG+	$450
MORE FUN	#71	F+ (CP)	$2000
MORE FUN	#71	VG	$900
MORE FUN	#71	VG/F	$1300
MORE FUN	#72	VG	$350
MORE FUN	#76	VG+	$465

(continued on next ad page)

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MY RAREST MARVEL!

The always controversial Dr. Keith tells the eerie tale of "Carbon Copy Man!"

A year ago or so, there appeared in *CBM* an article in which the so-called rare color cover variant to *Fantastic Four* #110 was touted as the rarest Marvel. While I feel this concept is nonsense (I don't think this book is rare… or even wanted), it did stimulate some fond long suppressed memories of my youth. After reading the article, I was swept back to 1964 quicker than I dreamed possible, even if I had had the Surfer's magic board or Thor's uru hammer!!!!

I was in the 8th grade in good old Lynchburg,Va and while my comic collecting was a priority, it would not be long when I would give it up for a time in search of testosterone-driven desires; namely, girls and football. But for a period of time spanning a few months of 1964, nothing was more important than comics in general, and Marvels in particular.

I had recently transferred from Catholic school to the strangest public school imaginable. At the time, Lynchburg had this bizarre policy of using neighborhood schools for grades 1-7 and then dumping everyone into a single 8th grade, housed in the soon-to-be-condemned old high school building located in a less-than-affluent part of downtown. Being outgoing and gregarious, I immediately became friends with kids that soon taught me every bad habit imaginable. They also were Marvel purists. Until then, I collected every kind of comic, but to fit in with these new, cool public school kids, I, too, became an early Marvel Junkie.

There were five or six of us that were very serious about our Marvels. We had, among us, almost every Marvel. One of us had paid the then princely sum of $10 for a beat-up copy of *Fantastic Four* #1 with tape on the spine. I had the only copy of *Amazing Fantasy* #15 known in Lynchburg and I had traded a Zombies record for it. We hunted high and low throughout the city to find our books. We ordered through the mail from Howard Rogofsky and Bill Thailing. If we had had the money, we could have ordered *Action* #1 or *Detective* #27. But no matter where we looked… or who's catalogue we ordered, we could not find what was, to us, THE RAREST MARVEL: *Journey Into Mystery* #90, known to all of us only as… Carbon Copy Man!

I let it be known all over school that not only did I have to have that book, I was willing to pay dearly for it either in cash, trade or both. Time went by. We turned up literally thousands of comics all over Lynchburg. We hit every attic in town and turned up such items as DC "trash" (*Brave & Bold* #28-39; *JLA* #1-19; *Green Lantern* #1-10, etc.) and even a few golden age books but NO Carbon Copy Man!!

Then one day while standing outside waiting for the buses to pick us up, a kid I knew wandered over to where I was standing. I could see he had a stack of comics in his hand. As he got closer, I realized I didn't recognize the book on top of the stack. When he was a few feet away I could see the top book clearly. The reason I didn't recognize it was due to the fact that none of us had ever seen it! At long last, here was the elusive and wonderful Carbon Copy Man!!!

I was so excited I could barely contain myself. The kid showed it to me and I nervously said "How much?" He then uttered words that up to that time in my life were the worst I had ever heard. "I don't want to get rid of it". He didn't want to get rid of it???!! I was immediately crestfallen and crushed. How could he not want to get rid of it? Didn't he know how much I wanted the book? By all rights that book was mine! He hardly even collected comics. What right did he have to keep me from a comic ordained to be mine? Then I got angry. I asked him if I could at least hold it. Overcome with emotion I did the only thing I could--I took off running with the book through downtown Lynchburg (being the fastest kid in school had certain advantages). I ran all over downtown and hitchhiked home. Then I hid the book in my room and called all my friends to tell them that I had the only known copy of the rarest Marvel, Carbon Copy Man.

The next day I completely denied stealing the book. Nothing ever came of it (as I said, this kid barely collected comics and was only jerking me around by refusing to sell it to me), and the matter was soon forgotten by all. In fact, it would only be a few more months that I collected comics at all. The month Ditko left Marvel was the month I stopped buying new comics.

Of course, what I did was wrong. I should not have stolen the book as stealing is wrong. I know that now and I knew that then. I also know now that wrongful deeds are usually punished; sometimes strangely and when you least expect it.

As I said, I stopped buying new books in 1965. Four years later I was off to Charlottesville for four fun-filled years of avoiding getting my ass shot off in some rice paddy 10,000

by Dr. J. Keith Contarino

GOLDEN AGE DC (continued)

MORE FUN	#77	F/VF	$800
MORE FUN	#78	F+	$900
MORE FUN	#80	G/VG	$425
MORE FUN	#85	F+	$465
MORE FUN	#88	NM+	$3950
MORE FUN	#91	VG+	$200
SUPERMAN	#2	VG/F (TS, CT)	$2500
SUPERMAN	#4	FN/FN+	$1700
SUPERMAN	#4	G/G+	$600
SUPERMAN	#6	G	$260
SUPERMAN	#6	PR	$100
SUPERMAN	#7	VG 49	$575
SUPERMAN	#8	G+	$300
SUPERMAN	#8	VG	$425
SUPERMAN	#8	VG/VG+	$525
SUPERMAN	#9	F+ (MR, KE)	$650
SUPERMAN	#9	G+	$325
SUPERMAN	#9	VG	$450
SUPERMAN	#10	VG-	$385
SUPERMAN	#10	VG/VG+	$525
SUPERMAN	#11	G/VG (CP)	$450
SUPERMAN	#11	VG/VG+	$375
SUPERMAN	#12	VG	$325
SUPERMAN	#12	VG+ 9AR)	$300
SUPERMAN	#53	F/VF	$1400
WORLD'S BEST	#1	VG+	$3000
WORLD'S FINEST	#2	F+	$1450
WORLD'S FINEST	#2	VG/F	$900
WORLD'S FINEST	#3	F/VF	$1500
WORLD'S FINEST	#3	VG/VG+	$500
WORLD'S FINEST	#4	F+	$925
WORLD'S FINEST	#4	VG+	$400
WORLD'S FINEST	#5	F+	$925
WORLD'S FINEST	#5	F/VF	$900
WORLD'S FINEST	#6	VG	$260
WORLD'S FINEST	#7	VG+	$375
WORLD'S FINEST	#8	VG	$230
WORLD'S FINEST	#9	VG	$290
WORLD'S FINEST	#11	F	$340
WORLD'S FINEST	#11	VG+	$325
WORLD'S FINEST	#13	VF-	$550
WORLD'S FINEST	#13	VG/VG+	$275
WORLD'S FINEST	#14	VF-	$550
WORLD'S FINEST	#14	VG+	$250
WORLD'S FINEST	#16	VG	$225
WORLD'S FINEST	#16	VG+	$250
WORLD'S FINEST	#17	G+	$150
WORLD'S FINEST	#18	G	$85
WORLD'S FINEST	#19	F	$290
WORLD'S FINEST	#20	F+	$400
WORLD'S FINEST	#20	VG	$175
WORLD'S FINEST	#21	G	$60
WORLD'S FINEST	#21	VG+	$175
WORLD'S FINEST	#23	VG+	$175
WORLD'S FINEST	#24	VF/NM	$650
WORLD'S FINEST	#25	VF/NM	$650

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miles from home and doing some matriculating in the process. I had left my comic collection in Lynchburg and had hardly given it a thought although I had started to buy *Conan* and the *Kirby Third World* books by then. After I graduated and moved to Athens, Georgia. I decided to get my books and start collecting again. During a trip home I went and got my books. Imagine my shock to find out that almost all were gone!! It turns out that my youngest sister, Jill, had had an outdoor slumber party a few years earlier and had used most of my collection to make confetti!!While some books survived, alas, *Jlh*# #90 was not one of them.

To this day, my sister has no idea why she tore up my comics. She knew they were off limits to her and she was not mad at me or anything like that. She said she was just drawn to them inexplicably. But I know why she did it. Surely I was being cosmically repaid for my evil deed of stealing that one, lone book. Because of that incident, my entire collection of thousands of comics was all but decimated. But you know, for that brief, fleeting moment when I first held that comic in my shaking and sweating hands,to have that feeling overwhelm me, I'd do it all again. ■

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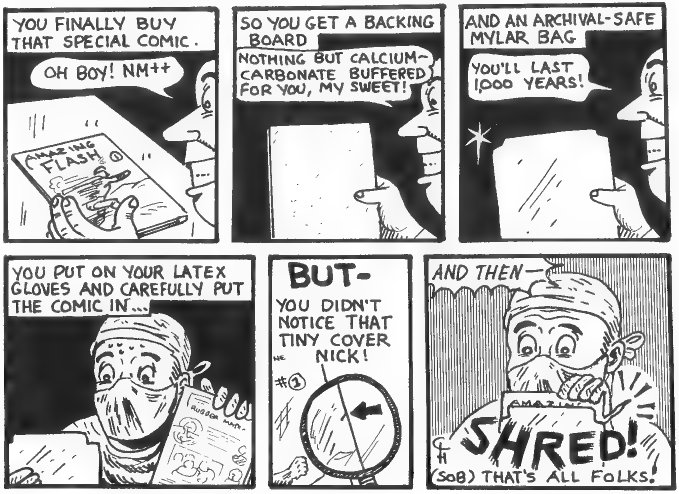
COLLECTOR TRIBULATIONS

By Carl "It Happens To Me" Horak


YOU FINALLY BUY THAT SPECIAL COMIC.
OH BOY! NM++
AMAZING FLASH
SO YOU GET A BACKING BOARD
NOTHING BUT CALCIUM-CARBONATE BUFFERED FOR YOU, MY SWEET!
AND AN ARCHIVAL-SAFE MYLAR BAG
YOU'LL LAST 1,000 YEARS!
YOU PUT ON YOUR LATEX GLOVES AND CAREFULLY PUT THE COMIC IN...
BUT-
YOU DIDN'T NOTICE THAT TINY COVER NICK!
AND THEN—
SHRED!
(SOB) THAT'S ALL FOLKS!

SHOWCASE NEW ENGLAND

GOLDEN AGE CAPTAIN AMERICA'S

CAPTAIN AMERICA	#1	VF+	$48000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#1	VG/F (ER,W)	$9500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#2	G/VG	$1500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#2	VF (CP)	$6000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#2	VF+	$12000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#2	VF+ (LR)	$7000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#3	VG+	$2200
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#3	VG/VG+	$2000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#4	F	$1600
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#4	VF (MR)	$1500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#4	VF+ (CP)	$2500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#5	VF	$3500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#5	VG/VG+ (TP)	$1000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#6	F/F+	$1350
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#6	VG	$900
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#6	VG- (CT)	$775
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#7	VF/NM (Chicago)	$6000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#8	F/VF	$1800
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#8	G/VG	$550
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#8	VF	$2200
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#8	VF+ (LR, KE)	$1650
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#9	G/VG	$550
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#9	VF-	$2000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#10	G+	$475
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#10	VF	$2200
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#10	VG/VG+	$950
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#11	G/VG	$500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#11	VF	$1800
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#12	VG/F	$800
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#13	VF	$3000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#14	VF/NM (CP, TS)	$1500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#15	F/VF	$1600
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#16	FR/G	$300
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#17	F/VF	$1500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#17	VG	$475
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#18	F/VF	$1000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#19	F/F+	$750
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#21	F+ (LR)	$550
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#21	VG	$350
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#22	F+	$750
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#23	F/F+ (CT)	$550
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#26	VF-	$1000
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#27	G	$200
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#28	G/VG	$350
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#30	VF/NM	$2500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#36	VG+	$650
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#43	F/VF	$700
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#44	F+	$600
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#57	F+	$575
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#58	F+	$550
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#59	NM-/NM	$3500
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#59	VG+	$600
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#60	VF	$850
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#62	VF/VF+	$900
CAPTAIN AMERICA	#75	NM (WM)	$3000

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THE INTERNATIONAL PHANTOM

The Phantom's international popularity is a phenomenon and his many names are quite varied. The following are some of countries which published Phantom comic books and the associated name:

Argentina - El Hombre Enmascarado
Australia - The Phantom
Brazil - Fantasma
Denmark - Fantomet
Estonia - Fantoom
Fiji - Bera Na Liva
Finland - Mustanaamio
France - Fantome
Germany - Phantom
Greece - Fantom
Holland - Fantoom
Italy - L'Uomo Macherato
Mexico - El Fantasma
New Zealand - The Phantom
Norway - Fantomet
Papua New Guinea - The Phantom
Portugal - Fantasma
Russia - Pahmon
Spain - El Hombre Enmascarado
Sweden - Fantomen
Thailand - IIWUSON
Turkey - Kizilmaske
Venezuela - El Fantasma
Yugoslavia - Fantom

HISTORY OF THE PHANTOM

Continued from page 36

and perhaps, Germane Ferri. Some later issues were drawn by Don Sherwood and the final ones by another talented Batman artist, the late Don Newton, who also painted some of the most effective covers since the Gold Key covers by George Wilson.

Although there were four *Defenders Of The Earth* comics, which were based on the syndicated TV cartoon series, the Phantom did not gain his own comic again until the four-part DC mini-series written by Peter David, penciled by Dennis Janke, inked by Joe Orlando, and colored by Anthony Tollin.

DC quickly followed with a run of 13 monthly comics drawn by Luke McDonnell. Although, the character still followed the rules set up by King and creator, Lee Falk, the DC comics were an attempt to apply modern comics sensibilities to the Phantom. The stories dealt with contemporary issues and were well written.

Comics Review reprints of various newspaper strips began with issue #27 (which included the Phantom). This issue is a favorite of Phantom fans due to the strong Sy Barry cover, a complete Phantom story, and an excellent article on Lee Falk by Anthony Tollin. More recently, Manuscript Press issued two Phantom comics simply titled *50 cent comics*, which featured the Falk\Barry story "The Runt."

Last year, two Australians, writer David DeVries and illustrator Glenn Lumsden, were responsible for a mini-series published by Marvel which gave the Phantom his most modern look yet, distancing it from the comic strip look of past efforts.

Due to the success of the animated TV series, *Phantom 2040*, a four-part series by Marvel featured the future Phantom, penned by Peter Quinones and drawn by Steve Ditko. When I mentioned the popularity of the early Phantom to Quinones, he responded by saying he would make the final story a tribute to the traditional Phantom, by returning to the skull cave and older costume and relinquishing the hi-tech gadgetry. Although the Marvel Phantom comics had a short run, the animated series enjoys a cult popularity in syndication.

The Australian publication, *Frew*, began printing black and white Phantom comics in the 1940s and continues today with the longest run of The Ghost Who Walks in the English language. They have now printed about 1,200 *Phantom* comics, including all the Lee Falk stories and many European adventures as well. Since the '80s (under the leadership of publisher Jim Shepherd), they have published the best, most complete, unedited versions of Falk's stories from the '30's to present, providing more background material than ever available before.

There were also 559 New Zealand *Phantom* comics which were reprints of newspaper adventures including the work of Falk, Moore, McCoy, and Barry. These comics are very hard to find and each one is only part of a Phantom adventure. They were printed in landscape rather than portrait format, which lent itself to presenting strips in a comic book.

In Sweden, the Phantom is intertwined with history. During WWII, the German occupation was telling the people the US had fallen, but the Phantom kept appearing in the newspapers- assuring the populace that the situation wasn't hopeless. The Norwegian resistance used the word "Phantom" as a code word. For more than four decades, Phantom comics have been popular in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Norway. The Semic Press in Sweden has been generating a new Phantom story every two weeks, and they have been widely circulated in other Phantom publications throughout Europe. These comics have some of the most exciting covers and feature the powerful work of artists like Felmang, and Hans Lindahl. Editor, Ulf Granberg is responsible for the quality of these fine comics. He has written many Phantom adventure stories himself and has helped develop hundreds of other stories. They have recently begun a new comic book featuring colored daily strips beginning with the Barry/Falk story, "The Slave Market of Mucar" from 1961.

An English publisher named Wolf exported Semic Phantom stories to the US, translating them into English. Unable to meet subscription goals of one year, the ninth issue consisted of black and white newspaper stories, and the subscribers were given copies of *Frew* for the remaining issues. The first eight Wolf Phantom comics are considered the best by many Phantom fans.

The strip is going strong today with Lee Falk still writing, and the artistic responsibilities are handled by long time penciler, George Olesen, with the dailies inked by Keith Williams and the Sundays inked by comic veteran, Fred Fredericks

The recent Paramount film directed by Australian Simon Wincer, with a script by Jeffrey Boam, starred Billy Zane as the Phantom, Christy Swanson as Diana and Catherine Zeta Jones as Sala. Set in the 1930s, it is highly touted as one of the best and most faithful adaptations of a comic strip to the big screen. This period piece is based on the first adventure, "The Singh Brotherhood", with elements from the next story "The Sky Pirates", and a strip from the '50's called "Gullique" or "The Belt." The movie has the feel of the old serials, complete with cliffhanger scenes but using modern technology. Unlike the brooding Batman films, it is a return to a simpler time when the hero was a positive role model and the forces of good won out over evil. ■

SHOWCASE NEW ENGLAND

GOLDEN AGE TIMELYS

ALL WINNERS	#2	VG/VG+	$700
ALL WINNERS	#3	VF/NM (CT)	$2400
ALL WINNERS Vol. #2	#1	VF	$1500
HUMAN TORCH	#2	VG	$1100
HUMAN TORCH	#2	VG-	$900
HUMAN TORCH	#3	F+	$1350
HUMAN TORCH	#3	VF/VF+	$2700
HUMAN TORCH	#3	VG+	$900
HUMAN TORCH	#4	F+ (CT)	$750
HUMAN TORCH	#7	G-	$175
HUMAN TORCH	#15	G-	$120
HUMAN TORCH	#19	F+	$400
HUMAN TORCH	#28	VG	$185
HUMAN TORCH	#37	VG	$175
MARVEL MYSTERY	#2	VF (LR)	$8500
MARVEL MYSTERY	#4	F+ (MR)	$2800
MARVEL MYSTERY	#5	G/VG	$2000
MARVEL MYSTERY	#5	VF (LR)	$6500
MARVEL MYSTERY	#7	NM (LA)	$12000
MARVEL MYSTERY	#7	VF	$4200
MARVEL MYSTERY	#12	G	$325
MARVEL MYSTERY	#16	FR/G	$175
MARVEL MYSTERY	#18	G/VG	$275
MARVEL MYSTERY	#19	F	$650
MARVEL MYSTERY	#47	FR/G	$90
MARVEL MYSTERY	#69	VG/F	$225
MARVEL MYSTERY	#90	FR/G	$75
MARVEL MYSTERY	#92	VF/NM	$2500
MYSTIC	#1	VF (MR)	$2000
MYSTIC	#2	NM- (Nova Scotia)	$4500
MYSTIC	#3	NM+ (Allentown)	$4200
MYSTIC COMICS	#4	G	$290
MYSTIC COMICS	#5	VG	$525
MYSTIC COMICS	#7	VG/F	$750
SUBMARINER	#2	G+	$600
SUBMARINER	#4	VG	$550
SUBMARINER	#9	VF+	$1800
SUBMARINER	#12	F+ 70	$650
SUBMARINER	#19	VF+ (D-Copy)	$1200
SUBMARINER	#20	VF+ (D-Copy)	$1200
SUBMARINER	#25	G	$100
SUBMARINER	#26	G	$80
SUBMARINER	#31	FR	$65
SUBMARINER	#34	F	$210
SUBMARINER	#34	G	$60
SUBMARINER	#35	G	$60
SUBMARINER	#35	G+	$75
SUBMARINER	#40	VG+	$150
SUBMARINER	#41	VG+	$150
SUN GIRL	#1	VG+	$300
YOUNG ALLIES	#2	VG	$500
YOUNG ALLIES	#5	VG	$600
YOUNG ALLIES	#7	VG/F	$215
YOUNG ALLIES	#10	VG/F	$215
YOUNG ALLIES	#12	VF	$500
YOUNG ALLIES	#15	F+	$275
YOUNG ALLIES	#19	F	$210

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Gordon K. Gold collection goes on the block!

Christie's fifth annual Comic Collectibles Sale will take place on November 1st 1996. The sale will be held at the Christie's galleries at 219 East 67th Street in New York City, beginning at 11:00 A.M. This year's sale promises to be an event. Christie's is offering the Gold Collection, the private premium collection of Mr. Gordon K. Gold. Gordon Gold and his father, Sam Gold were the originators and producers of radio, cereal and movie premiums, displays, and innovative children's books in the United States from 1920 through 1974. They were the creators of the ingenious and rare Mickey Mouse and Wizard Of Oz Waddle books as well as the innovative comic character pop-up books.

In the 1930's Gold developed premiums for radio and cereal companies. In 1945 he developed the comic character pin-back button cereal premiums for Kellogg's Pep cereal. The now famous 86 button set is still considered to be the most successful premium ever produced.

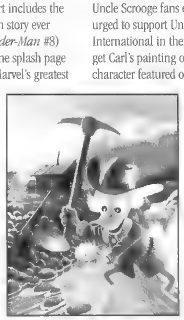
Christie's will also be auctioning an unpunched Mickey Mouse Waddle book, the waddles from the Wizard of Oz book, PEP pin original art, one-of-a-kind Superman, Disney, Western, Three Stooges, Dick Tracy, Popeye, and Buck Rogers premiums and displays plus Cracker Jack, Circus and Cereal box items.

Comic books to be put on the block in November include the Mile High copy of *All Star* #1, the Mile High copy of *More Fun* #71, *Superman* #1, *Batman* #1, *Action* #1, *Detective* #38, *Marvel* #1, *Green Lantern* #1, *Submariner* #1, *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories* #1, *MAD* #1-23, plus other early *Detective* and *Flash* comics.

Silver Age comics include a newly discovered collection with unique copies of *Amazing Fantasy* #15, *Detective* #225, *Showcase* #4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 19 (double cover), 20, 22, 23, 29, 38, 39, and 43, *Flash* #105, and *Incredible Hulk* #1. This in addition to the Bethlehem copies of *Brave & Bold* #34, *Strange Tales* #1, and *Journey Into Mystery* #1.

Comic art offerings include the newly discovered Kozlak Collection, a significant find of rare DC Golden Age art. Key examples from this collection include two early Green Lantern splash pages from *All American Comics*, a Joe Kubert Hawkman splash page and an exquisite Jack Burnley Starman page. Silver Age art includes the earliest complete Spider-Man story ever offered at auction (from *Spider-Man* #8) Christie's will also auction the splash page from what many consider Marvel's greatest Silver Age story from *Fantastic Four* #51... "This Man...This Monster".

Catalogues will be available the first week of October and can be ordered at (800) 395-6300. Questions regarding the auction should be directed to the Collectibles Department at (212) 606-0543.



Cartoon Saloon opens in Fort Lauderdale!

Planet Hollywood and Hard Rock Cafe move over! Hollywood superheroes Adam West (Batman), Lou Ferrigno (Incredible Hulk) and Julie Newmar (Catwoman) have announced the debut of Cartoon Saloon, Inc., a national chain of restaurants built around the theme of cartoons and comic books. Located in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, this restaurant offers a new twist on theme restaurants. Unlike others, the Cartoon Saloons are basically museums where food is sold and the customer is part of an interactive ongoing show. You may dine in front of a train tunnel, sit underneath a tottering piano, or take your chances with Gamma Radiation Juice at the Radiation Bar.

John Chruscinski, owner of Tropic Comics in Plantation, Florida (and a regular *CBM* contributor) is heading the retail sales operations at the restaurant. According to John, "Guests may peruse the impressive stock of "one-of-a-kind" collectibles gathered from the farthest reaches of the comic book and animation universe. Comic books, cels, paintings, original art, modeling statues, and a myriad of items from Looney Tunes, Hanna-Barbera, Disney, Marvel Comics, and DC Comics are displayed throughout the restaurant... and all are for sale!"

Fans push for Scrooge Commemorative Stamp!

Uncle Scrooge fans everywhere are being urged to support Uncle Scrooge Collectors International in their ongoing campaign to get Carl's painting of the famed Walt Disney character featured on a Canadian and/or United States postage stamp. The proposed theme would recognize the centennial of the famous Gold Rush which both nations will soon celebrate. The fan group suggests the use of "Eureka! The Goose Egg Nugget!" as the graphic for the stamp. It is Carl Barks' official oil painting celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Alaskan/Yukon Gold Rush and the founding of Scrooge McDuck's immense fortune. The memorable "discovery" took place "amid the privations and loneliness of Canada's vast Klondike area. That's when the lovable Scrooge first unearthed the fabled nugget in 1898." This newest work from the legendary nonagenarian is also the official painting celebrating the golden anniversary of the first appearance of Uncle Scrooge in *Four Color* #178 ("Christmas on Bear Mountain") first published in late 1947.

For more information contact the Uncle Scrooge Collectors International, c/o Ed Bergen, 178 McHenry Avenue, Crystal Lake, IL 60014. (815) 459-1441. ■

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GOLDEN AGE KEYS

ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN	#1	VG+	$375
AIR FIGHTERS	#1	VG/VG+	$375
ALL NEW COMICS	#1	G/VG	$350
ALL WINNERS Vol. #2	#1	VF	$1500
AMERICA'S BEST	#1	F-	$600
ARCHIE'S RIVAL REGGIE	#1	VG	$120
BLACK TERROR	#1	F+	$975
BOY COMMANDOS	#1	F+	$975
COMBAT	#1	VF+	$175
COMIC CALVACADE	#1	VG/VG+	$1800
CRIMES BY WOMAN	#1	F/VF	$550
DAREDEVIL	#2	NM (File Copy)	$3500
DAREDEVIL BATTLES HITLER	#1	F+ (LR)	$1500
DOC SAVAGE	#1	VF/NM (Denver)	$4000
EXCITING COMICS	#9	VG (CT)	$1000
FANTASTIC COMICS	#1	F/VF	$3000
FLAME	#1	F++	$750
HANGMAN	#2	F+	$750
JACKPOT	#1	G	$200
JOE PALOOKA	#1	F/VF	$275
JUNGLE COMICS	#1	VG+	$1200
KING COMICS	#1	G/VG	$1800
LAW AGAINST CRIME	#1	VG/F	$150
LOONEY TUNES	#1	VG/F	$4000
MASTER COMICS	#1	F/VF	$6000
MISTER FURY	#1	VF+	$2800
MORE FUN	#14	VG-	$3300
PEP COMICS	#17	VG-	$750
SHIELD WIZARD	#1	VG/VG+	$750
SPECIAL EDITION COMICS	#1	VG/VG+	$1500
SUN GIRL	#1	VG/F	$300
TARGET	#1	VF/VF+	$3000
TARGET	#7	VF/NM	$6000
TIP TOP COMICS	#1	VG+	$2000
UNCLE SAM QUARTERLY	#1	VF	$2250
WEIRD COMICS	#1	F+	$1800
WONDERWORLD COMICS	#3	VG (MR)	$750
WORLD WAR III	#1	F/F+	$250
YOUNG ALLIES	#1	G	$900
ZIP COMICS	#1	VG+	$700

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Contact the CBM Editorial Department

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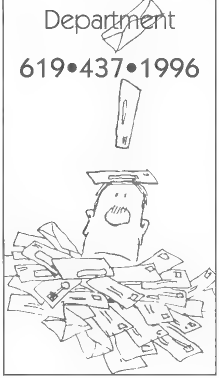

MARKETPLACE MAIL

Continued from page 8

views, important primary sources?), and on Marvel mania collectibles, especially the hard-to-find Marvel mania magazine. And how about a theme issue on Crime comics? All the best for the future. Yours sincerely,

Paul Gravett, London, England

Thank you for wonderful feedback Paul. We've received an avalanche of praise for CBM #36 (the Detective Dan issue)… letters are still pouring in. To put the spike in adverts in CBM #37 in some kind of perspective, most magazines try to achieve an advertising to editorial page ratio of 50/50. Our average percentage of editorial pages is always heavily weighted toward editorial. All I can say is that advertising is what keeps CBM afloat. I had this great dream the other night. . thousands of CBM readers all over the world suddenly decided to buy two of every issue thereby ensuring the success of the only "Magazine For Golden Age & Silver Age Collectors" in existence. Ahh… to sleep, perchance to dream… If only twere so…

A Puzzler

Just a note to let you know how much I enjoy your magazine. Here's something I think your readers might enjoy playing: ask them to name the covers of a particular character's "flagship" anthology book on which the character does not appear. For example, on which covers of Action Comics does Superman not appear? (do not look below yet!) Now, here's my answer; do you agree?: Action #s 2-6, 8, 9, 11, and 210!!

(Ok, Ok! It's just my opinion, but #210 depicts only a Superman statue and float (a' la Thanksgiving Macy's Day Parade) to illustrate the "Supermanland" story.)

Robert J. Baldwin, California

My love for your "puzzler" game has become addictive. In fact I've been told that I'm driving friends and colleagues crazy. I started with All American. then went to Flash, then Star Spangled, Detective, Adventure. and More Fun. Then I went on to other companies and now I CAN'T STOP playing the anthology quiz… Choke… Gasp… Sputter… AAAEEIII… IT'S ACCURSED! IT WILL DESTROY ME! (What a great game.)

My Kind Of Issue!

Hey Guys (Gary & Co.) What an INCREDIBLE coincidence! At the outset of this week, I received my latest package from John and Diane Hauser (terrific people to buy comics from, by the way!) which included a long-awaited copy of Strange Adventures #114, whose cover story is "Secret of the Flying Buzz-Saw" A scant two days later I held clutched in my hot little fist the newest issue of CBM and was reading Rolf Gerdau's nice little featurette on DC sci-fi covers and there he mentions the same story. He ascribed all the other stories to their original issues but this one is only identified by its reprint, which leads me to believe he hadn't found the original issue.

Besides the absolutely wonderful and somewhat different Russ Heath art (and a typically intriguing cover–Gil Kane?) on the cover story, there is a Sid Greene-drawn story that quintessentially captures his loopy charm ("The Man who Created Himself") and features a really cool panel on the final page depicting a man-meets-speeding-automobile situation, and the VERY FIRST Star Hawkins story, wherein Hawkins establishes his character right from the git-go by hocking his robot secretary Ilda to pay his bills.

All in all, a rather special issue, and one which I was just delighted to finally get my hands on. That is also a perfect description of this issue of CBM: a double dose of Silver Age DC sci-fi and some futuristic Carl Barks thrown in to boot. My kind of issue!

I have to agree with your anonymous correspondent who decries the rising prices of comics. It is truly a shame that so many wonderful books are now out of reach of so many collectors. It amazes me to read so much commentary on the comic's market that is more Wall Street Journal than Comicollector.

True, the hobby is thriving; and I have to admit that (1) the ever-rising market does bring an awful lot of good stuff out in the open, and (2) this is, after all, a free market society and what happens to comics is no different than what happens to any commodity in demand. And when all is said and done, we are talking comics books, not food or shelter, and there is no God-given right to affordability. And I suppose, way back in my misspent youth, Golden Age books were only ten or twenty bucks, but they were still out of my reach, even then. Despite having almost talked myself out of my position, I still think the

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SILVER AGE KEYS

AMAZING FANTASY	#15	VG	$2300
AMAZING SPIDERMAN	#1	VF+ 87	$13500
AMAZING SPIDERMAN	#14	VF+ 88	$1000
AVENGERS	#1	VF 83	$1500
AVENGERS	#4	NM 93	$2200
ACTION	#252	VF+ 87	$1800
ATOM	#1	VF+ 87	$600
BRAVE & THE BOLD	#28	VF+ 86	$5000
BRAVE & THE BOLD	#34	VF 75	$725
DAREDEVIL	#1	VF/NM	$1800
DETECTIVE	#225	F++	$2800
FANTASTIC FOUR	#1	VF+ 87	$15000
FANTASTIC FOUR	#1	VF 84	$10000
FANTASTIC FOUR	#4	F/VF	$1400
FANTASTIC FOUR	#5	VF+ 87	$2800
FANTASTIC FOUR	#48	NM 90	$950
GREEN LANTERN	#1	NM 92	$6000
IRON MAN	#1	NM/M 97	$475
JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY	#83	VF 86	$3400
JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA	#1	VF+ 88 (Bethlehem)	$6000
SHOWCASE	#4	F+ 72	$9000
SHOWCASE	#8	F	$3500
SHOWCASE	#17	VF+	$2500
SHOWCASE	#22	VG+	$725
SHOWCASE	#30	VF 85	$500
SHOWCASE	#34	VF+ 88	$1500
SILVER SURFER	#1	NM 91	$500
SILVER SURFER	#4	NM/M 98	$675
SUPERBOY	#1	F+	$2700
SUPERMAN'S GIRLFRIEND	#1	G/VG	$350
SUPERMAN'S PAL	#1	VG	$700
TALES OF SUSPENSE	#1	F/VF	$900
TALES OF SUSPENSE	#39	F/VF	$2100
TALES TO ASTONISH	#27	F/VF	$1200
TALES TO ASTONISH	#35	VF/NM 90	$2100
WORLD'S FINEST	#71	VG/F	$600
X-MEN	#1	VF/NM	$8000

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"investors" (as opposed to the "speculators" who seem to have largely left the field) have taken some of the fun out of the hobby for me. Unlike the nostalgic baby-boomer who is, say, a thoracic surgeon with plenty of disposable income to run the price of an early Showcase sky-high, I am a nostalgic baby-boomer with three kids and a mortgage and I cannot justify spending even a hundred bucks on a comic book, no matter how badly I want to see it. Again. I believe Jim Vadeboncoeur once said he's never spent more than $40 on a comic. I say: "Bravo, my man!" and "Thank Heaven those crazy fools value condition so all-importantly!"

And while all this prattle about The Market in CBM does drive me just a little crazy, your unabashed enthusiasm and love and great collective knowledge keeps me stoked and comin' back for more!!

I'll take more articles on DC sci-fi or Julius Schwartz books in general any time. Best wishes and keep the faith! Sincerely,

Tony Gleeson, California

I empathize with your position... I'm a nostalgic baby-boomer with one kid and three mortgages!

Kicking and Screaming

I recently picked up some CBM back issues which had items I felt deserved further comment... and besides timeliness was never a big fan concern.

The most intriguing piece of writing in CBM #36 was not the material reprinted from 1942 but rather J. Keith Contarino's insightful letter. He pinpoints exactly what's wrong with the back issue business. Prices for NM books have escalated in recent years and the prices for the other grades have been draggged along even though hardly anyone will pay guide prices for low end books. For these price increases to be uniform only makes sense in the case of Golden Age and rare books where there is demand for the books in any condition.

At least here in Kansas shows it seems that hardly any of the pricey books sell—mostly it's cheaper and 1/2 price books. And all of the stores have tons of books on their shelves which never sell 'but that's OK 'cause it's better to price a book at guide than actually sell it'. The thing is it's a guide, not a bible, but most dealers or stores treat it like the holy grail. And then as Contarino points out when it no longer reflects reality and everyone follows it the whole business slows down

The notion of the guide actually reflecting prices paid for books in all grades as opposed to the prices dealers put on books [and store owners put on books which sit on their shelves until they have a sale] may be disturbing to many but it's necessary to rework this system if we're going to keep it alive. Everyone made tons of money a few years back selling all kinds of junk, now the only way to survive is to be realistic and realize it's a buyers' market for the majority of books and decrease the price [and stretch the price range as Contarino suggests] to reflect that.

Another thing that is totally out of whack is the exorbitant price on certain Silver Age "firsts." I'm referring to books like Captain America #100. Iron Man & Sub-Mariner #1 and Superman #199 (the first race with the Flash) which a few years back a bunch of dealers decided were under priced. Now they're priced high but I've never seen anyone sell them at those prices. From the 1991 guide to the 1993 Superman #199 increased from $10 to $50 in NM!!! and now it's at $185, yet I've never seen or heard of anyone selling it at anywhere near these prices.

In the Speak Out section in #33 Michael Smith makes a few points I would like to address. Steranko's comic work is more in tune with certain high concept magazine graphics of the time as well as the cinematic approach to comics. He came across to me as a graphic artist who happened to be doing comics. Some of his work looks like storyboards and affects the reader like a movie. While Adam's style came to predominate the field for a long time, both indirectly and through clones, Steranko was the first to have a major impact on any of the new group of 1970's artists. I'm speaking of Gulacy and Starlin, both who made the cinematic approach the core of their work on such titles as Master of Kung Fu, Captain Marvel and Warlock.

Adam's art was great but I think his layouts and radical approaches to storytelling are the real reason he's the most important artist to come along in the Modern Age of comics. Gene Colan's dynamic layouts on Dr. Strange notwithstanding, Adams dragged comics kicking and screaming into the modern world with a number of incredible techniques and 'gimmicks.' He did this with much of the comic book world at the time rejecting his work as too radical. Just look at the letters' page in the X-Men during his run. I find this especially ironic since I feel that it is his best work—fun, surprising stories with incredible layouts as well as superb inking by Tom Palmer, the only embellisher who actually improved Adams art.

DC publisher Carmine Infantino seemed more receptive to new approaches than Stan Lee (perhaps because he was also an artist) and this is probably the reason Adams worked predominantly for DC. Lee let artists get away with a lot on the inside of the comics (proba-

Have you taken the CBM Survey?

(For comics published previous to 1980)

A. Based on my personal criteria, I think the most collectible comics of 1996 were: (list up to 25 individual comic books in rank order.)

B. Based on my personal criteria, I predict the most collectible comics of 1997 will be: (list up to 25 individual comic books in rank order.)

Send to: CBM Survey, P.O. Box 180900, Coronado, CA 92178.

Fax to: (619) 437-1993 E-mail to: cbmktpl@ix.netcom.com

See page 6 for details!

bly 'cause he and Marvel were always pressed for time) but when they tried something too different on a cover, such as Steranko's cover for Tower of Shadows #1 with its brilliant logo design or Adams' great original cover to X-Men #56, they had to start over or let someone else draw the cover. Stan rejected Adams X-Men #56 cover design because it "obscured" the logo but ironically it impressed John Byrne so much that he used it during the Dark Phoenix Saga.

I am mailing this before your Adams issue comes out, I'm just assuming it'll be great. Much has been written about him in the last 30 years but my favorites are still fan publications. The Art of Neal Adams and The Neal Adams Treasury. They not only have indexes and interviews but offer tons of art. They came out 20 years ago and are of course out of print, so any new Adams collector is going to have to spend some cash for the inside scoop on his work. I only wish there were a magazine such as The Jack Kirby Collector devoted to Adams so his fans could see all of the designs and sketches that went into the creation of his work

Greg Huneryager, Kansas

Out Of This World Adventures

My associate Tony Gibson and I have been collecting 1960's and 1970's comic books for a number of years. More recently we have taken an interest in earlier books and have discovered an interesting reservoir of older material.

We stumbled across one older gentleman who had a substantial collection of '20s to '50s pulp magazines in remarkably good condition. Amongst this was an interesting title which came out in 1950.

The title is Out Of This World Adventures published by Avon Periodicals. Volume 1 #1 was dated June 1950 and #2 December 1950. That is all that was published, the interesting thing being that these Pulp magazines contain Comic Books bound into the center. These contain stories by Kubert & Giuntá et al. I have looked in Overstreet and the stories contain the same characters as the Comic Book of the same title.

Can you tell me are these two pulps the original comic book split into two or are they new art work as I do not own the original comic I cannot do the comparison.

Also in his collection were some 1936 and 1937 copies of Thrilling Wonder Stories which contain Max Plaisted's Zarnak. Can you give us any more information on these?

David Cryer, Auckland, New Zealand

Avon bound-in coverless copies of their Out Of This World one-shot comic into their Vol. 1 #1 issue of Out Of This World Adventures (a pulp magazine). They bound in coverless copies of their Strange Worlds #1 comic into Vol. 1 #2. I searched for several years for the #1 pulp. I just picked it up a #2 at Chicago Con this summer after an arduous search. I think the real treasure of these two pulps (besides the obvious comic connection) is the fact that the table of contents shows not only the artists for the comic stories but the WRITERS as well! My copies look like they've been run over by a herd of elephants… and I'm grateful to have them! I'd like to also note (for the record) that Pat Calhoun deserves credit for the initial research on these interesting collectibles.

As for Max Plaisted's Zarnak, you got me on that one. Plaisted did comics (Exciting etc.) published by the same company, but I'm not aware of any data on the character Zarnak. Perhaps some CBM reader can enlighten us both.

Thanks for your great letter… and all the way from New Zealand yet. If anyone doesn't yet believe our hobby is truly international, just look at the letter columns of past issues. It's practically a world tour!

A Whole New World

Ever since my friend Eric Blackmore, (a frequent contributor to your Marketplace Mail section), sent me an issue of Comic Book Marketplace featuring Jim Steranko, I fell in love with your magazine. As a kid growing up in the sixties, I was a huge Jack Kirby fan. I was fortunate to meet him several times in the early seventies when he went over to DC Comics.

CBM has opened up a whole new world in comics for me. Comic artists like Kirby, Ditko, Wood, Neal Adams and Don Heck are some of my favorite artists. I now know about Dick Sprang, Lou Fine, Carl Barks, Virgil Finlay, Alex Schomburg and others from reading some of the excellent stories in your magazine.

It would be nice to see a CBM binder to store your beautiful magazine. They should be treasured like the comics we collect.

Dennis W. Benedict, New York

A CBM binder. now there's an idea! I'm

CBM Back Issues are still available...but act quickly!

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#28 SOLD OUT
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#31 Tuska, Lex Luthor, Hitler Comics!
#32 Hawkman, Anderson, Pedigrees!
#33 Catman, Marvel Memorabilia!
#34 SOLD OUT
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The Suspense is killing me!

Please find enclosed my "Expense Comics" parody. I think it captures the present feelings of many collectors, who have seen this title skyrocket in price... beyond the means of most collectors. Rarity is one thing... but the price of Suspense is killing me!

Ken Barnes, Pennsylvania

Restoration is here to stay?

As usual, CBM #39 was fun, but one part of the magazine has been disappointing for me... the market reports. I feel as though the reports are lacking in-depth analysis. So what about he market and how is it really doing? It's hard to tell by reading just the monthly reports. For example, the last Schiffman report completely puzzled me, in large part due to its contradictions regarding restoration.

For example, in the second paragraph Schiffman claims that restored Golden Age books are a major detraction for collectors and says that, "This is proven every time a buyer votes on the issue with their pocketbooks." But just two paragraphs later, the author states in regard to the Sotheby's auction, "Restored Gold was in abundance at Sothebys, but that didn't seem to hold back buyers from energetic bidding."

Schiffman then proceeds to state that "Many love to knock restoration, but regardless, collectors still want a great book and they are willing to pay for it." So which is it? Are restored books selling? If not then why are so many books being restored by collectors and dealers? If nobody purchased restored books then wouldn't the practice virtually disappear?

One thing is sure: restoration is here to stay (sorry Keith Contarino). People have been restoring and preserving art, paper collectibles, historical documents, etc., for years and years. What's wrong with restoring a comic? Nothing in principle, especially when it saves the book from death. Although inferior to unrestored books, quality restored books can be very attractive and collectible. Two major issues with restoration which have yet to be satisfactorily addressed in my opinion are the lack of full disclosure between buyer and seller and books that are being worked on that should be left alone (especially on the Silver Age).

Regardless of how you feel about restoration, all valuable books will probably one day be restored at some level. That's right. I mean how is the paper quality of that Action #1 going to be 300 years from now without "a little help?" All paper collectibles ultimately degrade and something will eventually have to happen

Another frustrating aspect of the market reports is the general avoidance to discuss any serious market slowdowns and their implications. Taken at face value, one could believe that the comic market as a whole is consistently bullish, at times so bullish that local governments and school districts should drop Wall Street and buy old comics! The fact is that the market also goes down, even despite the fact that most of the price guides tend to always show increases. How many markets behave this way? We never hear in depth reports about books being overpriced, consistently overgraded (except for the possible split grade scenario for which I have many tales) or collector turn off (No, it's not just with new comics). Part of the reason for never seeing this is because the market reports are largely done by dealers who have as one objective to promote the business of selling comics. Maybe this is the reason why I always hear those empty rumblings about how scarce, valuable, and overlooked those 1970s comics are. (Didn't we learn anything from Howard The Duck #1?) Also, I am surprised that with such interest in high quality key books, the market hype, consistent advertising by dealers and collectors who claim to pay top dollar from the bottomless pockets, that the Church copy of Superman #1 sold for just $180,000, only 1.8X NM Guide! Isn't that a low multiple for a Mile High?

Phil Carpenter, California

Personally, I didn't see any contradiction per se in Matt's report, but I can see how one might. Although I'm not a fan of restored books, I must admit that more and more of my collection books that I re-examine after years in storage clearly have amateur restoration... something that I didn't really notice (or care about) back in the 1960s and early 1970s when I first purchased them. It doesn't mean I love them any less, it just means that about 50% of the collectors I know feel they are worth less. But hey... just like you, I also have fun trying to predict the state of the hobby (and the marketplace) two or three hundred years in the future, and have often discussed the role of (and requirement for) restoration as time continues its attack on paper collectibles. Thanks for your candid

and provocative letter Phil… it's nice to hear from you again.

French Back Issues?

I'm just reading CBM #38! Great fun! A treasure trove for French people… I'm very interested to buy back issues of CBM. Please, what is their price and overseas shipping?....and foreign subscriptions? Thanks. P.S. For back issues, which ones are available, in Vol. 1 and Vol. 2? Hoping to hear from you soon. Best wishes.

Philippe Angeli, Toulouse, France

Nice to hear from you Philippe. To answer your questions, twelve-issue subscriptions to France are $110.00 (in US funds) and back issues (Vol. 2, #22-39) are $10 each (this includes shipping). Regrettably, issues 23, 25, 28, and 34 are already sold out and a few others are close to selling out. Get 'em while they last… cause they won't last long!

Headed for middle ground

Just finished reading issue #39 (what a beautiful cover) and wanted to drop a note to say how impressed I was with it, especially the Eisner article. Golden Age enthusiasts have enjoyed in recent years the unearthing of mountains of valuable statistical data, like scarcity and artwork identification, etc., as well as information on the history of comics publishers and individual titles. Articles like Peter DePree's, which focus on the actual creative milieu so unique to our hobby, and the personalities of the creators, seem to be one of the next logical steps in the evolution of comic book research.

The work involved in DePree's article is to be applauded. The creation of a narrative style from all the research data and hours of interview records is a tough task to pull off, and he synthesized it all quite nicely in smooth fashion. It was a trans-historical, noir ride around comic book history, you might say. Bravo!

It's redundant, I guess, to laud the articles by Calhoun and Nolan. Give 'em a raise! And Jon Berk's articles on my favorite Golden Age artist, Lou Fine, was welcome. The profound effect Fine had on comics art evolution can't be understated. I only wish Fine was around today, to share his own window into comics history, and to enjoy the stature his work has attained.

Switching gears, I must admit that the request I made of you some years ago for more information about sales and pricing haunts me a bit now. It was made when the "market" for Golden Age comics operated much more leisurely, when this kind of information wasn't readily available. I fear the pendulum has swung, and there's simply too much manipulation going on now. Hopefully, we're headed for middle ground. This isn't an indictment of the sales reports in CBM – I think you balance your content appropriately, but I do think we've experienced the biggest "blip" in the history of our hobby over the past couple of years, and it'll be interesting to see where it'll all go from here.

Lastly: I've noticed the name Paul Gambaccini appearing in CBM a few times. Could this be the same Paul Gambaccini whose name appeared on a few issues of Fantastic Four which passed through my collection some years ago? I seem to remember the name inked on the top of the splash pages… from issues dated around 1965. Ever lived in New England, Paul? Keep up the excellent work, Gary!

Jon Signorelli, Rhode Island

Paul now resides in England and is a regular and much-welcomed writer to Marketplace Mail. It's postulated that you do indeed have one of his old collection copies. Since Paul reads CBM regularly, I've no doubt he'll let us know in an upcoming bit of correspondence. I look forward to your next article Jon.

Welcome Jacob Allen!

So sorry I haven't written in a while, but on April 17, 1995, my wife and I had our first child, a boy… Jacob Allen Hackenburg, and the comic world has just grown by one! He's 18 months old now and quite a handful, and I don't read as much as I used to, but I still haven't missed an issue of your great magazine!

Some random thoughts: The 100-pagers that DC put out in the 1970s are becoming harder and harder to find! The super hero books are not hard to locate in mid-grade, but the DC Romance 100 pagers are impossible to locate in any grade! I have, some years back, completed my Silver Age Marvels and have been working on my DCs since. Wow Gary, Silver Age DC's are harder to find than Marvels! and I can only find DCs in low to mid-grade (which is what I can afford), and finding the Flash, (my personal favorite), is getting tougher and tougher. I also collect Marvel memorabilia from the 1960s and that is also hard to find anywhere! As for new issues… I have stopped collecting new issues as of last week when the last issue of the Fantastic Four (#417) hit the stands. I'm 35 and have read the Fantastic Four since issue #100 (1970) and am truly saddened that Marvel has decided to ignore the past history of this legendary book and will begin all over again with a new #1!

Let me leave you on a bright note: a friend of mine, Todd Anderson, also 35 years old, recently paid $100 for a Mint copy of DCs

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Spectacular 100 page #5 (rare) 10 times Guide! When I asked him if it was worth it, he replied, "Yes, I've been searching three years for it and I would have paid more!"

I love your magazine, and thanks for putting so much of yourself in it--it shows.

Gary Hackenburg, North Carolina

No "S" On Superman

To comment on Lynn Woolley's "The Evolution of Superman's' Shield article in CBM #39...there is no "S" on the emblem. What we are seeing is actually yellow Kryptonian symbols which signify the Jor-El family crest. If there is anything resembling an "S" in the insignia it is purely by coincidence.

John Mlachnik, Minnesota

There's no "M" in Mlachnik either, John. Anything resembling an "M" is there purely by coincidence (chuckle). But seriously folks, John is right about the "Jor-El family crest/Kryptonian symbol" angle. One aspect of it, though, is the fact that it was proposed in the Silver Age and so all those Golden Age issues must actually have an "S" on 'em. OK, OK... I give up...

He Created Batwoman!

That was a great article on Adam Strange in issue #37. I may be able to shed some light on the Edmond Hamilton connection. James Van Hise mentions a story called "Kaldar, World of Antares" written by Ed Hamilton in 1933 that used a teleportation method that bore a striking resemblance to Adam Strange's zeta beam. He then mentions that Hamilton wrote some scripts for DC so that he and Adam Strange creator Gardner Fox may well have known each other.

Actually, Hamilton wrote many scripts for DC. He probably wrote 1/3 of all the Superman stories published in the 50's, as well as being the number two Batman scripter (behind Bill Finger). Among his many contributions was the creation of Batwoman! He also wrote a large number of stories for editor Julie Schwartz's Mystery In Space and Strange Adventures.

There is a more direct connection, however. In 1958 the DC editorial staff often held meetings to come up with ideas for new features to be used in Showcase. It was at one of these editorial meetings that was decided to try out two new science fiction features, one set in the present and one in the future.

Editor Jack Schiff took the future hero concept, while Julie Schwartz took the present day one. There, at that very meeting, both concepts were fleshed out and the first stories of both Space Ranger and Adam Strange were plotted! The two writers involved in that joint plotting session were Ed Hamilton and Gardner Fox! Hamilton and Fox went on to write all of the early Space Ranger stories, until Arnold Drake took over. Fox has always gotten solo credit for Adam Strange, but in a session like that, I'm sure Hamilton contributed his share of ideas including his old World of Antares story.

By the way, Van Hise makes a remark about Space Ranger being a Buck Rogers clone. Space Ranger was a typical super-hero strip, set in the future. Space Ranger had a secret identity and a secret hide-out and battled all kinds of costumed villains. Buck Rogers was a man from the present transported to a strange super-scientific world of the future. That sounds more like Adam Strange than Space Ranger to me.

Let's have more articles about great old features and their creators like this one, and fewer about how much all these books are increasing in "value".

By the way, for anyone out there who is wondering about the quality of the Micrographics fiche, I can attest to their excellence. I have acquired the complete run of All-Star Comics through them, as well as 100 or so issues of other titles and I've never been less than satisfied. Most library fiche readers work fine, (and you're liable to attract an audience!).

After searching for a while, I was able to find my very own fiche reader at an office surplus store for next to nothing. For a cheap, convenient way to read Golden Age comics, I don't see how this can be beat. Sincerely,

Bob Hughes, New Hampshire

As an avid Edmond Hamilton fan myself, bravo to your excellent letter Bob!

That crazy Fox paper!

A note of appreciation for your excellent efforts in producing such an interesting and useful magazine... and monthly too! I look forward to each issue more than the latest comics and have learned a great deal from the

articles, and, perhaps especially, from the letters (the more the better). I wish more advertisers would use CBM, then it would really be a one-stop paradise for Golden Age collectors.

I've been buying various Fox comics recently and have a question for all those Fox experts out there. It's well known that Fox printed on the cheapest paper available and I've got issues on white, pink and thick grey pulp paper. I recently had in my possession for comparison, three copies of Junior Comics #13 and each was printed on different paper! (By the way, each one had horizontal tears on the last few pages… A bindery fault?).

Does anyone know whether all Fox's are available on white paper (which to me, anyway, are preferable as it shows the cut off to best effect). I've never seen a Phantom Lady #23 on white paper for example. An esoteric question, I know, but what better place than CBM, which glorifies the esoteric, to ask it!

Laurence Bowkett, London, England

What an excellent research question! Let's see how many Fox collectors can answer your challenge.

No. 1 Mag

Just a couple of words to say that you have a Number 1 magazine in Comic Book Marketplace. As your records will show, I have just recently subscribed and I have thoroughly enjoyed the issue I have received and look forward to receiving them each month. The articles are great and very informative and well written and the reproduction of covers is terrific!. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!! Sincerely,

Joseph N. Ortego, Louisiana

Oldest comic club

The West Coast Comic Club is the oldest, continuing club organization in the country. The club is a non-profit organization. The club will be celebrating its 26th anniversary. The members are participant fans from Orange County, CA. We share common interests in comics, media, science fiction, and fantasy art. Moreover, the West Coast Comic Club handles the Russ Manning Award presentations.

As for Russ Manning himself, he is one the well-known comic artists for Silver Age in comics as well as in the newspapers. He has done a great deal of his best work like Magnus, Tarzan, Star Wars, etc. Russ Manning died in 1981, his works and projects are being printed or reprinted in comics these days. At the same time, his name and his works have been honored by the establishment of the Russ Manning Most Promising New Artist Award presented by West Coast Comic Club and Comic-Con International San Diego.

For the past thirteen years, the West Coast Comic Club and Comic-Con International San Diego have established and co-sponsored the Russ Manning Awards. Each year the West Coast Comic Club will announce and give an award to the Best Young Artist of the Year at the Comic-Con International San Diego. Additionally, the Russ Manning awards are provided by the West Coast Comic Club.

This year the West Coast Comic Club will be having an auction on November 9, 1996, to raise funds for the Russ Manning Awards. We are currently seeking art and comic donations: Gold and Silver issues, toys, original artwork, rare items, T-shirts, computer/video CDs, videos, posters, figurines, comics, trading cards, sports clothes, electronics, appliances, games, role playing games, jewelry, autographed items, collectors items books and related art, media, science fiction, fantasy, animation, comics and other items related in the comic industry.

Would any Comic Book Marketplace readers interested in donating any of these items to raise funds for the Russ Manning Awards? Please send donations by November 1, 1996 to West Coast Comic Club, c/o Christina Caloroso, PO Box 612, Placentia, CA 92871-0612. If anyone has any questions or needs further information regarding donations or the club itself, please contact Eugene Henderson at (714) 639-0089 or Christina Caloroso at (714) 528-5314.

We at the West Coast Comic Club look forward to hearing from CBM readers and thank them in advance for any assistance they might provide.

Christina Caloroso, California

Pedigree Puzzle

It seems to me we owe a great deal of thanks or gratitude to a small number of people, tied forever to our hobby, but about whom we know very little. I'm referring to Edgar Church, Tom Reilly, Lamont Larsen, Recil Macon, A. Wallace, Frank Blankis and Stanley Panchon. There are others but they are not identified, for whatever reason, in CBM. Issue #32--Matt Nelson's article "The Pedigree Puzzle" offered us some information about them and perhaps that's about all we will ever learn.

I was moved by the Tom Reilly story of his parents continuing to accumulate his collection after he went off to war. It was sad to learn of his dying in the service resulting in his parents sealing off his room and discontinuing the collection. Are there family photographs or people around today willing to discuss with us anything more that they will agree to have published? Is there an article or a series of articles some energetic writer can search out and record for CBM readers and future hobbyists?

While only remotely connected to this topic, every time I think about Edgar Church's collection, I am reminded of a black and white photograph on display by Sparkle City during a convention in Boston some years back. Pictured up close was a newsstand rack of comics containing row upon row of those 10¢ gems, some two, three or four deep behind the issue in front. It brought back fond memories of my brother and me buying some of those issues from the wall rack at Joe's Candy Store in Newark. Thanks for listening.

John G. Schreiber, New Hampshire

I was moved by the Tom Reilly saga as well. Thanks for writing John… thanks to everyone who took the time to write in. If you'd care to correspond, send your comments and questions to: CBM's Letters to the editor, PO Box 180900, Coronado, CA 92178 – FAX (619) 437-1993 – Email address cbmktpl@ix.netcom.com

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HISTORY OF HORROR COMICS!

Continued from page 29

the best effect. The Atlas-Seaboard line failed within a year. This was mostly because of distribution problems, but largely because its concepts were too unappealing and derivative to find much favor, though a few, like *Planet of Vampires* were not without some interest to horror fans.

Planet of Vampires storyline found a crew of astronauts trapped on a planet ruled by bloodsuckers, and featured handsome cover art by Neal Adams, along with some interior pages by the excellent and under-rated Russ Heath. Though the idea borrowed a bit too much from Richard Mathieson's oft-adapted novel, *I Am Legend*, it was an intriguing premise that was unfortunately never fully developed in the title's short, three-issue run. In line with the derivative nature of most of their titles, Atlas-Seaboard also had their own knock-off of Vampirella--"Devilina" a bad girl with definite Satanic overtones.

By the late 1970s and early '80s Marvel and DC canceled most of their horror titles, while other publishers' black and white horror magazines had already disappeared. The Warren titles limped along, trying to maintain reader interest with increasing doses of sex and violence in magazines like *1984*. The mid to late--'70s brought a slight resurgence at Warren with some high quality scripts by Bruce Jones and splendid art by veterans like Severin, Heath, Toth, Wood and Williamson, or one of the brash new horror masters like Richard Corben or Berni Wrightson.

Warren's horror finally expired in the early '80s, but were resurrected by Harris Publishing in the early '90s. By astutely combining a flood of new Vampirella titles with well-done reprints of the best classic material, and by emphasizing Vampi's status as one of the original "bad girls", Harris has had great success with the Warren material.

And although many horror comics can be fairly classified as grotesque trash, horror comics in general have enjoyed a more distinguished literary pedigree than superhero comics, with frequent adaptations of acknowledged literary classics by Bram Stoker, Mary W. Shelley, Robert Lewis Stevenson, Victor Hugo, Edgar Allen Poe, Ambrose Bierce, Ray Bradbury and Robert Bloch.

Although the price of vintage ECs has skyrocketed in recent years, fans of the EC artists can still find their work in reasonably priced reprints, and for budget-minded horror aficionados many excellent color horror comics and black and white magazines from the 1970s are still relatively cheap and abundant, if you diligently search the bargain bins of your local comic shop or used bookstore. So if you know where to look, there are still many unexpected treasures to be unearthed--a nice inking job by Wallace Wood, a horror story or cover by Alex Toth, early artwork by Kaluta, Wrightson, and Jones, or a script by the usually excellent Archie Goodwin and Bruce Jones.

Although in the 1990s the horror anthology is on the wane, character-driven horror titles like *Vampirella*, *Evil Ernie* or *Lady Death* are more popular than ever. And no matter how many times horror comics have a stake driven through their collective hearts by censorship, poor sales, or the changing tastes of comics fandom, like one of the ambulatory corpses in an EC story, they always seem to come back. ■

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